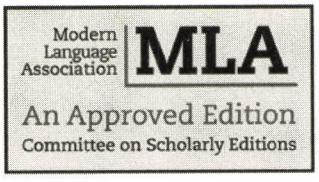
THE COLLECTED STORIES OF RAY BRADBURY

A CRITICAL EDITION

VOLUME 2: 1943–1944

Jonathan R. Eller, General Editor and Textual Editor

The Kent State University Press Kent, Ohio



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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 2010023893
ISBN 978-1-60635-195-6
Maufactured in the United States of America

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Bradbury, Ray, 1920–
[Short stories. Selections]
The collected stories of Ray Bradbury : a critical edition / volume editors, Jonathan R. Eller and William F. Touponce ; general editor, William F. Touponce.
v. cm.
A three-volume edition of Bradbury's stories, presented chronologically, 1938–1968.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
Contents: v. 1. 1938–1943
ISBN 978-1-60635-071-3 (v. 1 : hardcover : alk. paper) ∞
1. Science fiction, American. 2. Fantasy fiction, American. 3. Horror tales, American. I. Eller, Jonathan R., 1952– II. Touponce, William F. III. Title.
PS3503.R167A6 2010
813'.54—dc22
2010023893

18 17 16 15 14 5 4 3 2 1

THE COLLECTED STORIES OF RAY BRADBURY

Volume 2: 1943–1944

"They hurried into the great, pink-stoned city, whispering among themselves. . . . " Alexander Leydenfrost's title illustration for Ray Bradbury's "The Million Year Picnic," in the summer 1946 issue of *Planet Stories.*

For **Karl Zimmer Jr.,**

and in fond memory of **Barbara Zimmer,**

for making it possible to publish this series,

and for their part in shaping the world of books

that Ray Bradbury loved so dearly all his life.

For **Donn Albright**

who preserves the storyteller's story,

and

For **Ray Bradbury,**

who lived the storyteller's life.

THE COLLECTED STORIES OF RAY BRADBURY
A CRITICAL EDITION
is edited by

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Center for Ray Bradbury Studies continues to be indebted to the Indiana University School of Liberal Arts (IUPUI) for founding and sustaining the Center within the overarching research and editorial home provided by the Institute for American Thought. Since the establishment of the Center in 2007, internal support for the development of *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury* series has been crucial to all aspects of research and volume production. I'm grateful to Dean William Blomquist for continuing the tradition of assigning research faculty and professional staff in the School of Liberal Arts to the Institute's resident scholarly editions. Dr. David Pfeifer (director of the Institute for American Thought from 2009 to 2013) provided wise counsel and strong encouragement during the development of *Collected Stories* volume 2, as has his successor, Institute cofounder and Chancellor's Professor of History Marianne S. Wokeck. My thanks go as well to Professor Martin Coleman, general editor of the *Works of George Santayana,* for allowing two of his staff editors to support volume production. Professor André De Tienne, general editor of the *Writings of Charles S. Peirce* and director of the Peirce Edition Project, also allowed one of his resident staff editors to take on a concurrent role with the publications of the Center for Ray Bradbury Studies.

The editorial specializations of these three resident editors, and their long years of experience in scholarly editing endeavors, made it possible for us to navigate the complex textual variants of Bradbury's creative history as we worked to recover and document his earliest intentions for the stories he composed during the middle years of World War II. For this volume Joseph D. Kaposta of the Peirce Edition Project moved into the role of assistant editor for *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury,* supporting all aspects of transcription and stabilization of the story texts; he also contributed in significant ways to the volume's annotations and the record of the stories from this period that Bradbury composed but never published. David Spiech, a full-time textual and technical editor with the Santayana Edition, continued as our production editor, preparing our volume materials for press and providing valuable liaison support as the volume moved through the various stages of design and

layout conducted by the Kent State University Press. I'm also grateful to Kristine Frost, associate editor of the Santayana Edition, for supporting the very demanding pre-and post-editing stages of proofreading required to ensure the production of reliable texts. Professor Andrew Jewell of the University of Nebraska (Lincoln) vetted this volume for the Modern Language Association's Approved Edition seal—a crucial validation of our editorial approach.

During the research and production of this volume, I found the support and editorial expertise of the Bradbury Center's core editorial staff essential to refining the quality of our production standards. Associate editor Robin Condon oversaw many aspects of production, contributed textual annotation research, and established fully articulated procedures for the research and preparation of the massive but very accessible editorial apparatus prepared for each volume of *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury.* I'm deeply indebted to editorial associate Matthew A. O'Haver, who worked long days and countless hours comparing all the published forms of the stories and recording thousands of variants in the historical collations. All five of these individuals hold advanced degrees as well as Indiana University's graduate certificate in Professional Editing, an interdisciplinary graduate program in the School of Liberal Arts that has contributed significantly to all of the resident scholarly editions of the Institute for American Thought.

Diana Dial Reynolds, now retired from the Institute, was the first transcription editor of the *Collected Stories* series, and volunteered personal time to review volume 2's intricate textual apparatus. I'm also grateful to outside reader Cathie Carrigan of IUPUI's Office of International Affairs for her comments on the volume's textual commentary, and especially grateful for the detailed comments and critique offered by my colleague April I. Witt, assistant textual editor of the Peirce Edition Project. It's also essential to thank our external contributing editors Donn Albright (Pratt Institute) and Phil Nichols (University of Wolverhampton, UK) for supporting every stage of research. Donn Albright's legacy is woven deeply into the edition series; he has been the principal Bradbury bibliographer and archivist for nearly forty years, and made available his unrivaled collection of elusive magazine printings of the volume 2 stories. His advice and guidance have helped to shape all aspects of the Center for Ray Bradbury Studies and its publications, as has the work and scholarship of Professor Emeritus William F. Touponce, founding general editor of the *Collected Stories* series and co-founder of the Bradbury Center. His unequalled grasp of Bradbury's literary and cultural significance played a significant role in shaping the course of this edition, and I continue to be grateful for his advice.

The course of the *Collected Stories* series has also been shaped in a very important way by Karl Zimmer Jr. and his late wife Barbara Zimmer, who provided the initial funding for rights to the volume 1 stories. Karl has made it possible

to extend the series into multiple volumes through his continuing long-term support. I value his unflagging enthusiasm, which derives in no small part from his pivotal role in the postwar expansion of American publishing in overseas markets. I also value the memory of Barbara, a dedicated educator who, like Karl, believed in the Bradbury Center from the start.

Ray Bradbury will always form the heart of this critical edition of his earliest stories. His decision, late in life, to allow this scholarly glimpse at his creative origins made the series possible, and it was our great good fortune to know that he lived to see and appreciate the first volume in print. I continue to be indebted to his daughter Zana, who preserved and extended her father's career, and to Michael Congdon and Cristina Concepcion of Don Congdon Associates, who advised and provided permissions with the same enthusiasm and dedication with which they have preserved the legacy of Ray Bradbury in print.

Jonathan R. Eller
Summer 2013

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INTRODUCTION

DISPUTED PASSAGE

Bradbury's Stories, 1943–1944

> Have you not learned great lessons from
> those who braced themselves against
> you, and disputed the passage with you?
> —Walt Whitman

"I can't believe that there are two of me, and I'm the witness now, to what I did before." These words, offered during a private interview in 2004, capture Ray Bradbury's late-life fascination with the young writer he once was. This fascination emerged slowly, beginning perhaps when he entered his own 1960s stage adaptation of *Dandelion Wine*—as an adult character—to recover what he had forgotten about being a small-town midwestern boy of the 1920s. In later years, he would touch the few surviving typescripts of his earliest stories with the same reverence that Howard Carter, one of his first real-life heroes, would touch the ancient artifacts of King Tutankhamen's tomb.

He spent decades refashioning many of his early pulp and mainstream magazine stories to form the intricate story-cycle tapestries of *The Martian Chronicles* and *Dandelion Wine;* other tales were revised or rewritten for such timeless collections as *Dark Carnival, The Illustrated Man, The Golden Apples of the Sun, The October Country, A Medicine for Melancholy,* and *I Sing the Body Electric!* These volumes represent wonderful and enduring fictional masks for the author, but they are not his original masks. *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury* series returns to the earliest surviving forms of his oldest published tales, presenting many of them in versions not seen since the 1940s and early 1950s, when the Golden Age of the American magazine began to pass into history. The restoration of these texts is a scholarly enterprise, including searches through long-lost typescripts, hundreds of elusive magazine issues, and thousands of textual variants, seeking to restore the author's earliest intentions for his first published stories.

But the greatest service of this series may be the presentation of these stories in the order in which he composed them; in this way, readers and researchers may trace Bradbury's maturing creativity and his vital discovery that his best tales could only emerge from the extension of his own personal experiences into fantastic realms of reverie. In a very real sense, *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury* represents a deeply personal forensic enterprise, building the creative autobiography that Bradbury never wrote himself. The twenty-five stories published in volume 2 were all written between April 1943 and March 1944. During that brief interval of time, while the world around him blazed through the decisive months of World War II, Bradbury moved ever closer to becoming a masterful teller of timeless stories.

This passage wasn't an easy one, and it was complicated by the occasionally unbridled creativity that constantly washed up from his subconscious. During the middle war years Bradbury still imitated the styles of his mentors and genre favorites, but he was also turning to the things he knew best about life—the fears and hopes of a child's world, the secret passions and dark anxieties carried forward from childhood into maturity. He was gregarious at times but was at heart a solitary writer and dreamer, operating on the margins of complex psychological tensions: the great divide between childhood and the adult world, the ambivalent boundaries between life and death, and a burning desire for meaningful achievement in a world governed by rules and authority figures.

• • •

The emerging quality of his writing had unlikely origins. Bradbury had sold newspapers on a Los Angeles street corner from 1938 to 1942, the years when many other members of the Los Angeles High School class of '38 attended college or moved into the broader work force. During 1942, with a few story sales in hand and a flexible arrangement for room and board with his parents, he turned to writing full-time; when poor vision left him medically disqualified for military service, he wrote promotional radio and print ads for Red Cross blood drives as a form of voluntary alternative service. He made just enough money from his short stories in 1943 to pay income tax for the first time; there was no money for books, but he read voraciously in libraries and bookshops, occasionally buying discarded volumes for a quarter from the library of the May Company department store.

In this way his education remained a work-in-progress, guided at times by Leigh Brackett, Edmond Hamilton, and Henry Kuttner, professional genre writers he had come to know through the Los Angeles Science Fiction League. His core values, however, based on the experience of a working class family caught up in the desperate migrations of the Great Depression, were more fully formed. He hated to see laborers called communists any time they stood up for

workplace rights; he despised intolerance of any kind, especially racial intolerance; and he was critical of any form of government or business that sacrificed the rights of the individual for power and wealth. Violence terrified him, yet he was fascinated by the psychological frontiers where neurosis crosses over into full-blown psychosis. Above all, he hated the modern nightmare of total war.

The performing arts had stimulated his imagination almost as much as reading. Bradbury had an abiding love of stage and screen, and a passion for the music of the nineteenth-century Romantics as well as the modern symphonic composers. During 1940 and 1941 he ushered concert nights at the Hollywood Bowl and the touring ballet performances at the Philharmonic Auditorium. He also enjoyed contemporary swing on the radio and in concert; his New York agent, Julius Schwartz, was beginning to spark an enthusiasm in him for the jazz scene. Yet he pulled back from most of these passions, and quit attending meetings of the reconfigured Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, when he began to write full-time. He was, above all, a keen observer of people, and throughout the war years he lived and wrote in two very different worlds.

Bradbury kept a day-office of sorts in a tenement near the corner of Temple and Figueroa in downtown Los Angeles. The neighborhood offered a rich multiracial world in constant transition, including Mexicans who had fled the chaotic years that followed the Mexican revolution of 1911. Their American-born children, now young adults Bradbury's age, were sometimes caught in the tensions of a racially conflicted city. There were also African Americans, Asians, Europeans, and waves of transient military personnel in training or in transit. This microcosmic world offered daily domestic dramas, occasional crimes, and fairly tame black-market intrigues, often playing out in the streets and surrounding nightspots. The city's dynamic metropolitan ebb and flow stimulated Bradbury's imagination and his Whitmanesque fascination with the energy of a city in constant motion.

Tension between the new generation of Mexican Americans and the military personnel who passed through their neighborhoods exploded into the so-called Pachuco riots in late May and early June 1943, at times quite close to his Figueroa Street world. The first night of these disturbances actually began well to the west of Los Angeles—a small altercation at the Venice Beach pier and amusements, just blocks from where Bradbury lived with his parents and older brother, Skip. Bradbury wrote here too, but this was a very different world from the downtown tenement in Los Angeles; the little house at 670 Venice Boulevard had a detached garage containing a small nine-by-nine office with a single window facing the red bricks and fine stonework lintels of an adjacent power substation. Here he worked late into the night, watching the pale green glow of the humming machines that reduced the voltages to residential levels, trying to make a different kind of energy radiate out from the keyboard of his portable typewriter.

He sent and received his professional mail from the downtown tenement, and by the spring of 1943 he could count on weekly updates from Julius Schwartz, his New York agent, about the stories circulating and selling back East. Bradbury even sent Schwartz blank status sheets, each with a group of circulating story titles and subsections to record the latest news about each title. These sheets, even more than Schwartz's encouraging and instructive letters, point up Bradbury's inexperience with the publishing world that Schwartz already knew so well—Bradbury's earliest surviving "Story Questionaire" [*sic*] dates from the summer of 1943 and opens with an official-looking typed and centered request to "Please Fill This Out, huh?"

A less experienced agent might have marginalized or even dropped such a naïve client. Julius Schwartz was just five years older than Bradbury, but he had been operating the only New York literary agency for science fiction and fantasy writers since 1936. Schwartz patiently filled in the questionnaires for his young friend, carefully explaining how each of Bradbury's widely divergent stories required a different strategy for submission to the nearby pulp magazine offices of the various publishing houses. Sometimes the need to fill in Bradbury's "Why" block for each rejection revealed momentary exasperation—for the last in a series of summer 1943 rejections by *Astounding Science Fiction*'s John W. Campbell Jr., Schwartz's response to Bradbury's insistent "Why" was simply "Because he's a jerk!"

But Schwartz had seen remarkable improvement in Bradbury's submissions by the spring of 1943, and he carefully orchestrated submissions to find the best fit among the dozen or so science fiction and fantasy magazines that had so far survived wartime paper restrictions. Most weeks, the news was good; in less than two years of representation, Schwartz had closed deals for thirteen Bradbury stories, and many of these had already reached print in a variety of genre pulps. From the spring of 1943 through the spring of 1944, Schwartz sold five more of the older Bradbury stories that were already in circulation; this group included "Chrysalis," which he had reworked under Henry Kuttner's close mentorship for more than a year.[1]

All of this activity formed a creative backdrop for the thirty-nine stories that Bradbury composed during the volume 2 period; by the spring of 1944 ten of these new stories had also sold, making a total of fifteen sales through this very productive twelve-month span. In all, twenty-five of the new stories eventually reached print, all but one during the mid- and late 1940s—his peak years in the world of pulp fiction. Some of these could have reached what Bradbury then called the "quality" magazines; in fact, "The Man Upstairs" (*Harper's*, March 1947), though not his first story to reach the mainstream magazines, was the oldest Bradbury composition to achieve that distinction.

Even when a story didn't click, editors were impressed by the originality of

idea and the unique style that was emerging in many of these tales. His initial breakthrough as a steady seller to *Weird Tales* would continue through 1943 and 1944, even though the aptly named editor-in-chief Dorothy McIlwraith wanted more traditional plots than Bradbury would ever be willing to give her. To some degree, his success originated in the office next to McIlwraith's; Lamont Buchanan, known as "Monty," had become the associate editor at *Weird* a year earlier, and quickly developed a strong interest in the off-trail Bradbury stories that Schwartz regularly sent him. Buchanan was more dynamic than his predecessor, Henry Perkins, and McIlwraith allowed him a fair degree of input in acquiring stories. At times, this made all the difference for Bradbury.

Schwartz and Buchanan developed a largely unspoken synergy in orchestrating Bradbury's sales. Certain stories—especially the child-centered tales that irritated McIlwraith the most—were held back until the timing was more psychologically right; in this way, reverie-centered stories like "The Sea Shell" and "Reunion" could slide across McIlwraith's desk just after more acceptable folk-tale grotesques like "The Scythe," "There Was an Old Woman," and "The Jar." Bradbury was now a regular with the oldest magazine in the field, appearing in five of the six bi-monthly issues of 1943 and in all six of the 1944 issues.

Schwartz was only blocks away from most of the New York pulp magazine syndicates, and the increasing quality and edginess of Bradbury's horror tales led him to send some of these fantasies to the only real competition that the venerable *Weird Tales* faced—John W. Campbell's *Unknown Worlds.* This was Street & Smith's fantasy companion to *Astounding Science Fiction,* which Campbell had turned into the leading SF genre magazine. Many of his regular *Astounding* authors, including Robert Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, and Henry Kuttner, were now in military service or other war-related jobs, and Schwartz was actually able to sell "Everything Instead of Something," or "Doodad," to Campbell for *Astounding*'s hard SF readership. "Everything Instead of Something" was a sardonic, somewhat humorous homage to A. E. Van Vogt's "Weapon Shops" series, which had wrapped up in three recent issues of *Astounding;* this connection may account for Bradbury's only true story sale to *Astounding,* but there's no doubt that Campbell saw stand-alone merit in "The Emissary," which Schwartz quickly sold to him for *Unknown Worlds.* Here was still another child-based fantasy, but the edginess and metaphor-rich style made it a perfect fit for *Unknown.*

Beneath its rather pedestrian homage to the weapon shops, "Doodad" was also a trying out of crime plotting and dialog. The story centered on a crime reporter and his exposé of a crime boss, signaling a natural genre progression for a newly minted pulp phenom. It would prove to be a significant step for Bradbury—the detective and crime magazines had a long and sensational history, and were woven more deeply into Depression-era and wartime culture than the science fiction and fantasy genre magazines. Bradbury's familiarity with the

genre already went beyond the crime pulps; his closest mentors, Leigh Brackett and Henry Kuttner, had been pivotal influences in this evolution. Kuttner led him to the hard-boiled private "Ops" of Dashiell Hammett's novels, and the often more brutal underworld characters of James M. Cain. Brackett introduced him to the more carefully styled works of Raymond Chandler, which proved an even greater attraction for him. But the fantastic criminal worlds of Cornell Woolrich attracted him far more than the works of any other noir writer of the period. He discovered Woolrich on his own in the fall of 1941, and read all of his novels (published under various names) throughout the 1940s, including *Black Alibi, Phantom Lady,* and *Rendezvous in Black.* The carefully paced terror film adaptations of Woolrich's novels, shaped by such masters of terror as RKO's inimitable Val Lewton, enriched his appreciation for Woolrich's signature situation—when unexpected and terrifying events enter the lives of ordinary people.[2]

Leigh Brackett also fed Bradbury's passion for background studies of the criminal mind. He had already found Dr. Karen Horney's *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time* and her studies of psychotic types, as well as Dr. Frederic Wertham's *Dark Legend,* his controversial study of a real-life New York matricide. Brackett broadened his clinical readings by introducing him to the police perspective through *New Horizons in Criminology,* by Barnes and Teeters. Yet her most important contribution to his developing studies in crime fiction probably came through her detective novel *No Good from a Corpse,* which he read chapter by chapter, fresh from her typewriter, during their regular Sunday work sessions on Santa Monica Beach. This novel provided Bradbury with useful—though often ignored—lessons in pacing and plot development, and would soon win her a screenwriter's job with Howard Hawks for *The Big Sleep.*

Reading was one thing; plotting and writing noir was something else entirely. So far he had only circulated one police procedural crime story, "Remember Helen Charles," a spring 1943 nightclub murder mystery that never sold. But the continuing wartime paper quotas were forcing more and more of the pulp houses to reduce the number of pages per issue, reduce the number of issues per year, or even suspend publication of certain titles. Expanding into the crime magazines seemed prudent; if Bradbury was ready to cross over, Schwartz was more than ready to provide the bridge. The timing was right; in the summer of 1943 Schwartz's good friend Mike Tilden became editor of *Detective Tales,* one of the Popular Magazine syndicate's stable of crime magazines. Both Tilden, who would soon take over *Dime Mystery* as well, and Ryerson Johnson, editor of the companion magazine *New Detective,* saw great potential in Bradbury's highly emotional characters and vivid storytelling style. Between September 1943 and March 1944 Bradbury composed seven new crime stories, and Popular's editors bought five of them.

• • •

Bradbury's passage into pulp prominence was not undisputed, however, even though the volume 2 period was clearly his best so far in terms of production and sales. Tilden and Johnson were enthusiastic about Bradbury's unusual stories, but Alden Norton, managing editor at Popular, was often frustrated by the many ingenious ways that such a talented writer managed to destroy genre rules and conventions. Here was the same problem he had encountered with Dorothy McIlwraith at *Weird Tales;* once again, though, he had allies among the sub-editors, who were willing enough to buy most of Bradbury's crime story submissions until 1947, when that vein of creativity began to play out.

Nevertheless, Norton had identified the essential tension that would drag at Bradbury's unruly creativity throughout his career. He was simply not interested in writing according to genre traditions or rules; instead, he gave free reign to his imagination in all aspects of original storytelling, including plot development. It was a bargain he had made years earlier with his subconscious, allowing the characters to control the action of his stories. This was merely a method, of course, not a delusion, but it prevented him from using the logical rules of detection to plan story structure. Given this approach, the traditional ratiocinative method of working backward from a solution to structure a crime story was simply out of the question. As a result, Bradbury often failed to develop motive or properly place the subtle clues and misdirection that genre readers require.

Schwartz, who was far more effective as a coach than as a mentor, had touched on this problem as early as the spring of 1943, when Bradbury submitted the ill-fated "Remember Helen Charles." The writing was confident, the characters strong, but the killer's motivation was weak and there were no clues for the reader. Schwartz offered a brief critique, referred him to Howard Haycraft's *Murder for Pleasure,* and hoped for the best.[3] And indeed, there were strengths in many of the crime stories that soon emerged from Bradbury's portable typewriter. Henry Kuttner praised his restraint in developing the child's point of view for "The Trunk Lady." Others, however, were a bit too impressionistic for the genre; Leigh Brackett found "Where Everything Ends" too vague and the murderer undeveloped, even though the premise—a swimming killer who stalks his victims soundlessly along the Venice Beach canals—was fascinating. Alden Norton felt the same way, and reluctantly bounced the story when Schwartz submitted it for *Flynn's Detective Fiction.*

The consequences of his unconventional approach to crime fiction are manifest in other unsold stories and surface even more painfully through tales that he drafted but never circulated at all. The detective stories within this group often had original and creative premises but were weakly plotted; others had structural flaws or character motivation problems and involve well-worn situations that were simply not worth the trouble of fixing up—"Remember Helen Charles" centered on an unconvincing revenge plot, while "Who's Little Corpse Are U?"

involved a predictable cocktail party murder game gone awry. Bradbury's various attempts to flesh out humorous "what-if" situations into crime stories never really worked at all. "Douser" Mulligan, an eccentric private detective with a bizarre genius for insulting and needling a crime boss until he incriminates himself, made it into print twice as "Enter—The Douser" ("Half-Pint Homicide") and "Four-Way Funeral" before the potential of this character diminished into unpublishable horseplay and radio comedy; a rejected third story ("Long Live the Douser!") and two unfinished story fragments were soon abandoned. Other attempts at humor, including a criminal mastermind whose need to be "liked" leads to an improbable rehabilitation ("The Boss") and a comic alcoholic who manages to save himself from a murder frame-up by binge drinking ("Solution from a Bottle"), reveal more about Bradbury's interest in human behavioral problems than they do about his development as a writer. Between the lines, all of these failed crime stories reflect his abiding dislike of the genre rules that would drive him away from mystery writing for nearly forty years.

To his credit, Bradbury's growing ability to write about the hopes, fears, and aspirations that define our humanity usually transcended genre boundaries anyway. His publishable crime stories were not very different from the edgy stories he wrote for *Weird Tales;* if he clothed some of his characters as detectives, gunsels, crime bosses and their molls, it was largely because Tilden, Johnson, and Norton could pay him one and a quarter cents to one and a half cents per word. *Weird Tales* had started him at a half cent a word, and then locked him into the penny-a-word rate that nearly all of their writers endured.[4] Bradbury always got along with his editors, but he loathed the policies that came down from publisher William J. Delany, who kept *Weird Tales* in the shadow of his better-paying broader market magazine, *Short Stories.*

Weird had always operated on a narrow profit margin, and the various attempts to make it more profitable had only diminished the prewar variety of the contents. This played against Bradbury's natural tendency to present off-trail stories and to experiment with the perspective of childlike reverie. His frequent appearances in *Weird Tales* mask the significant number of rejections, including "The Man Upstairs," which found its way into *Harper's* instead. In 1946, as he revised and even rewrote many of his unconventional weirds for his *Dark Carnival* collection, he bridled when his publisher, August Derleth, suggested that he should be grateful for his half-cent-a-word start: "They rejected tale after tale because it was too off-trail, 'we want stories with ghosts and haunts and terrible creatures in them.' I was god-damned if I'd write about ghosts and haunts and dark necromancies."[5]

The pressure to slant his work to fit this self-defined niche market was magnified by the fact that he had little money during these years. He was sensitive about the poverty he had known all his life and regarded this impersonal

market pressure as a very personal insult. "The pressure was there all the time to turn me into a hack," he told Derleth. "And it was unfair pressure, because I had no money, and the temptation was great." His failure to sell consistently to the science fiction and fantasy pulps added even more pressure, for this had been his desire above all else since his teenage years. The scheduled publication of "The Emissary" in Campbell's prestigious *Unknown Worlds* should have been his breakout achievement, but Campbell soon realized that the unrelenting paper restrictions left him no choice but to shut down the best fantasy magazine in the field. The October 1943 issue was *Unknown*'s last, leaving "The Emissary" without a publisher for years to come.

Bradbury was perhaps too close to these genres emotionally, and by 1943 his exposure to science fiction and fantasy was narrowing in ways that were unhealthy for his development. He no longer attended LASFS (Los Angeles Science Fiction League) meetings, and the writers who had critiqued his earlier stories in person (Jack Williamson, Ross Rocklyn, and Henry Kuttner) no longer lived close by. He was reading less extensively in the remaining science fiction pulps, but he still met with Leigh Brackett most Sundays at Santa Monica Beach. She critiqued his story drafts and he read hers, thereby encountering a double dose of influence at every meeting.

It was inevitable, then, that he would follow her into the pages of *Planet Stories,* a reliable second-tier quarterly where she was already a perennial favorite. Long odds stacked against hard-luck protagonists provided an opening gambit for many of her science fiction tales, and Bradbury would fashion a similar situation in "Lazarus Come Forth," where a vast mortuary ship with a two-man crew enters into a fiercely contested interplanetary war on the far edge of the solar system. The loneliness and isolation of this story, a familiar element of the darker Bradbury science fiction tales that would follow, also set the mood for "Perchance to Dream" ("Asleep in Armageddon"), where the sleeping mind of a marooned astronaut is slowly absorbed by the ghosts that still haunt the strange planetoid where he awaits rescue. By his own admission, the central conceit of "Perchance to Dream" was inspired by Brackett's "The Sorcerer of Rhiannon," which he read shortly before starting his first draft of this eerie tale.[6]

Planet Stories provided a haven where his confidence and skills could develop. Once again, Bradbury encountered an editor who was willing to take a chance on the emotional impact of his more focused pieces. Wilbur Peacock, a recent addition to Malcolm Reiss's editorial staff at *Planet Stories,* acquired Bradbury's first three *Planet* tales, as well as "Lorelei of the Red Mist," a Leigh Brackett novella project that she eventually coauthored with Bradbury. She was not at all above writing for money when she had to, and by working so closely with her he was, in effect, slanting to the perceived market. It was a line that Bradbury would rarely acknowledge crossing, and within a few years he would never have to cross

it again. But for now, in the field he wanted to write in more than any other, he sometimes wrote for market in order to gain both stature and experience.

This intermediate plateau in his development as a science fiction writer was populated with such stories as "Lazarus, Come Forth," "Rocket Skin," and a half dozen other tales written before or after the volume 2 period that found their way into other second-tier pulps. Even *Thrilling Wonder Stories,* one of the pioneer magazines created by Hugo Gernsback in the late 1920s as *Wonder Stories,* had settled into a juvenile and "military age" market that featured the "bug-eyed monster" covers and stories that Mort Weisinger had cultivated during his tenure as editor. Oscar Friend continued this format throughout the war years, and it's not surprising that Bradbury's earliest sales to *Thrilling Wonder* lacked the stylistic signatures or refinement of idea that was emerging in his other genre forms at that time. "The Piper," which previewed the haunting moods and highly emotional situations of his later work, and the unremarkable "Promotion to Satellite," appeared in 1943 issues of *Thrilling Wonder,* but over the next four years he would place only one volume 2 period story—the improbable "Rocket Skin"—in its pages.

He would make do with the reliable *Planet Stories* (and four more or less science fictional appearances of older stories in the middle-tier fantasy pulps)[7] until Sam Merwyn Jr., Friend's postwar successor at *Thrilling Wonder,* began to salt in a few more of Bradbury's intermediate-stage tales between the remarkable new Martian stories—focusing on first contact and colonization—that he began to write after 1945; by this time, Bradbury had left the bustling downtown tenement world behind, writing exclusively and at all hours in the Venice Beach garage behind the vibrating mysteries of the powerhouse.

But Bradbury was really not interested in writing scientifically refined stories anymore than he had been interested in aligning with the formal conventions of his other two genres. He was far more interested in extrapolative "what-if" situations that probe the essence of humanity and simply surrounded them with science fictional elements. With the exception of "Lazarus Come Forth" and "Rocket Skin," an odd tale that projects the depression-era world of railroad hobos into the futuristic rocket trajectories of interplanetary space travel, none of the science fiction stories written during the volume 2 period would reach print until after the war. This was partially due to the backlog created by the wartime publishing reductions and the fact that most of the suspended magazines never came back at all. To a greater extent, however, the relative lack of publication in his chosen field reflected how his vivid style and natural tendency for emotional storytelling would find a better fit in the horror and crime pulps until he developed greater restraint as a storyteller.

Nevertheless, two of his science fiction tales from the volume 2 period offer early examples of his signature work in the field. Only four fragment pages survive from his earliest attempt to compose "Perchance to Dream," but these

show that he was well on his way to fashioning the riveting tale that eventually reached print in the winter 1948 issue of *Planet Stories.* It was the first of the dark and edgy science fiction tales that reflected his mixed feelings about the darker aspects of Modernism and the uncertain future awaiting nations (and ideologies) still involved in global conflict. His alternative to the dark realism of modern literature was still a vision in progress, but initially he worked around it through a series of dark science fiction stories.[8] "Perchance to Dream" offers a living metaphor representing the isolation, the loneliness, the unconsolable despair, and the terrifying encounters with Otherness that might be the price that Humanity pays for reaching other worlds and other solar systems. Against all odds, the marooned space pilot fights off the barbarian ghosts that invade his mind when he sleeps, finding ways to stay awake for days, only to have his rescuers ignore his wild story and fill him with sedatives. He dies in his sleep, as will his rescuers, after they bed down for the night.

"The Million Year Picnic" offers a distinct contrast to these nightmares and represents one of Bradbury's earliest anticipations of his role as a Space-Age visionary. His postwar alternative to modernist despair would be symbolized by the rocket, a technological wonder that could be used to destroy mankind with weapons, or to lead humanity to the stars. Many other writers would pursue similar hopes and fears, but what gave Bradbury's Space-Age myth traction was the way he presented his stories through the eyes of ordinary people, adults and children, who yearned to explore and by this means give humanity a second chance.

Volume 1's "King of the Gray Spaces" ("R Is for Rocket"), composed in January 1943, had been the true forerunner of this method, looking outward to the stars from a teenage boy's point of view. "The Million Year Picnic," composed just six months later, added the crucial next step: a look back at Earth in its final days of warfare, seen from the eyes of a little family that has made its way to settle among the silent ruins of a vanished Martian civilization. A few other families will follow, and this tenuous hold on another world represents a second chance for those who have learned the lessons of an exploited and doomed planet. It would appear in the summer 1946 issue of *Planet Stories,* along with "Lorelei of the Red Mist," the seamless Brackett-Bradbury novella that signaled the end of his apprenticeship as a writer. With revisions, "The Million Year Picnic" would form the redemptive conclusion of *The Martian Chronicles,* anchoring the foundation for Bradbury's eventual role as the best-known literary spokesman for the Space Age.

• • •

In spite of his disputed passage through the frenetic wartime world of pulp fiction, the stories of the volume 2 period include early exemplars of his finest literary achievements. If "The Million Year Picnic" contains the precious seeds of

The Martian Chronicles, "The Night" defines the essential awakenings of *Dandelion Wine:* the complex and inextricable weave of birth, life, death, and eternity. "The Emissary" and "The Jar" show the full range of his edgy dark fantasies, and "The Trunk Lady" exemplifies the intersection of crime and fantasy in Bradbury's imagination. As a whole, the twenty-five stories presented here reveal the subjects and themes that would engage him, from this point on, for the rest of his career.

Critics would sometimes take him to task for his focus on what Damon Knight later pinpointed as "childhood and the buried child-in-man."[9] But many writers who discovered Bradbury were fascinated by that element as young readers, even if they would eventually grow beyond his influence, and a number of the stories in this volume represent early articulations of these themes. Escape from (or denial of) the adult world is implicit in "The Sea Shell," "The Emissary," "Reunion," and "Jack-in-the-Box." At the time, Henry Kuttner was concerned that his thematic focus was still too narrow: "I note you have two main themes; refusal to grow up, and fear of death. . . ." He was especially concerned by Bradbury's two Johnny Choir stories, "The Ducker" and "Bang! You're Dead!" Johnny's inability to discriminate between playing soldier back home and being a World War II combat soldier in Italy didn't ring true to Kuttner, and the dialog was terribly overwritten. But Bradbury's extension of his psychological readings into fictional "what ifs," such as the Johnny Choir tales, was quite engaging for Jack Snow, then a writer and archivist at NBC Radio who would soon write the only readable sequels to L. Frank Baum's Wizard of Oz series.[10]

Reluctance (or inability) to enter the adult world, and Bradbury's tangible fear of death, were bound together in some of his stories with another theme—his sometimes passionate distrust of authority. The delusional mother of "Jack-in-the-Box" is obsessed with isolating her teenage son from the outside world; he has never seen the world beyond their enclosed estate and never seen automobiles, the "metal monsters" that ran his father down and killed him before the boy was born. Bradbury felt that pedestrians were an indicator species; he was convinced that threats to their safety, or threats to their right to walk at all, would be one of the first indicators of authoritarian repression in a free society.[11] Above all, he had a particular anger for authority that endangers creativity. The schoolroom library of "Jack-in-the-Box," where the precious books have been mutilated to protect the child from knowledge of the outside world, offers a hint of what would emerge years later in *Fahrenheit 451:* "The firelight ignited the little animal lettering on the shelved books. Those books from which pages had been razored and torn and censored, from which certain lines had been inked or erased, from which all pictures had been ripped, some books glued shut, or locked in bronze straps, because Edmond might see, read, understand."

Bradbury was also concerned about more literary forms of authority; his reservations about the burgeoning science of semantics, and the General Semantics

of Alfred Korzybski that was influencing a number of science fiction writers, surfaces in four of the stories he composed between January and June 1943.[12] These allusions first appear in volume 1's "King of the Gray Spaces" ("R Is for Rocket"), where Bradbury describes semantics classes and training stations to suggest a future society where General Semantics has become essential for the mastery of complex technologies. Writers such as Robert Heinlein and A. E. Van Vogt felt that General Semantics offered a new approach to perceiving and interpreting experience, free of the limiting "either-or" syllogisms of traditional logic. This new use of language would inevitably involve new modes of communicating knowledge and experience, and Bradbury soon became uneasy with the negative aspects that such power and authority might bring.

Three of his stories written during the spring of 1943—"Everything Instead of Something" ("Doodad"), "Referent," and "The Shape of Things" ("Tomorrow's Child")—all show that General Semantics remained on his mind. In the earliest (and previously unpublished) version of "The Shape of Things," the mother of the trans-dimensional child, who works in a semantics institute, has a far better capacity to understand the child than the mother found in the rewritten version of the late 1940s, who has no connection with semantics at all. But the larger implications of General Semantics were clearly becoming problematic for Bradbury, and his references are overtly critical in the other two stories.

In "Everything Instead of Something," a new mode of referential language and naming protocol is essential for designating and manipulating the constantly repurposing devices of the weapon shop; these absurd nuances are beyond the understanding of everyone except the alien shopkeeper himself, leading to the death of both the antagonist and the protagonist of the story. "Referent" contains the next and almost inevitable Bradburyian extrapolation—it is completely shaped by what Bradbury perceived as the endgame of general semantics. The precocious child Roby is confined to an educational island where he is constantly conditioned to the complex rules of labels and referents until a shape-changing alien, a "referent" for nothing and everything, arrives. Roby soon intuits how to change places with the alien and escape from the confines of both his prison and his home world.

It's not difficult to find the motivation for these stories. The processes of General Semantics ran counter to Bradbury's core concept of creativity, where the mysterious upwellings of the subconscious must not be manipulated by rational thought until the revising process begins. For Bradbury, the mystery must always remain mystery, or else it cannot continue as a source of speculation and inspiration. More than anywhere else in his early canon, these stories show the central imperative of his imagination—never question the mystery too closely, or else we might be forced to see the awful truth at the heart of things. This was his version of a Nietzschean caution that had already passed into Western culture: "If thou gaze long into an abyss, the abyss will also gaze into thee."[13]

. . .

Until 1944, Bradbury had no literary model to validate his views on such refined psychological examples of authoritarian control. Then he read Ayn Rand's neo-Romantic novel *The Fountainhead* and discovered her lone wolf architect Howard Roark. Here was a protagonist who would never compromise his aesthetic integrity, no matter how much pressure was brought against him by corporate designers, builders, or critics, and no matter what the personal cost. Bradbury cared little for Rand's philosophy, but he was totally absorbed by her architect and his ability to resist the formidable pressures of the marketplace.

The Fountainhead validated his fierce desire to be original, to write on themes and in ways that often ran counter to the wishes of the various pulp fiction publishing houses. The romanticism would stay with him and would soon begin to color the way he would talk about writing. Just a few years after composing the stories in this volume, Bradbury offered a seldom-seen glimpse of the fires that fueled his determination to write about the larger truths of life; these remarks, surviving in his earliest talking papers on creative writing, never reached his many published essays on the subject that was dearest to his heart. The repetition of key words clearly defines a text meant to be spoken with deliberate emphasis and conviction:

> [T]here was always one core belief in me that burned from the time I was twelve on: I want to be different, to be different from everybody else, everybody else, different. When an artist has that, he either has everything or nothing. . . . [I]f he continues wanting to be different, different, then no matter what happens to him, if he is forced to write for pulps, slicks, or radio and Hollywood, he will one day burst his bonds and be free. It is only that hard core of wanting to be different that separates the true artist, I believe, from the man who writes merely as a means of livelihood.

Reading had been his best ally in this fight to be different, and during the spring of 1944 he began the most ambitious reading program of his life. To ensure that this endeavor would not lead to imitation, he turned away from reading the genre pulps almost entirely. He would still read the work of his friends, Ed Hamilton and Leigh Brackett, and would stand as best man when they married; he would continue to read Jack Williamson's work, some of Isaac Asimov's, the subtle horrors of Fritz Leiber, the darker ones of Robert Bloch, the versatile collaborations of Henry Kuttner and his wife, C. L. Moore, and the wide-ranging genius of Theodore Sturgeon. All of these writers were or would become his friends, and he still found their creative work as rewarding as their friendship.

Bradbury was already familiar with the classic short fiction and poetry of earlier masters; but his decision to shift his personal reading away from the genres where he had found early success cleared the way for a far broader reading of contemporary American and British fiction, poetry, drama, cultural studies, and social history. This reading would have a tremendous impact on his writing—soon, very soon, his stories would begin to reach the major market magazines, and mainstream readership would discover a unique stylist well on his way to becoming a master storyteller for midcentury America.

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Notes

1. All seventeen of these stories appear in *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury,* volume 1. In order of sale, they include "Pendulum," "Gabriel's Horn," "The Piper," "The Candle," "Promotion to Satellite," "Subterfuge," "The Wind," "And Then—The Silence," "The Crowd," "King of the Gray Spaces," "The Monster Maker," "Morgue Ship," and "The Scythe"; those volume 1 period stories sold during the volume 2 period are "I, Rocket," "Chrysalis," "The Lake," "Undersea Guardians," and "Tomorrow and Tomorrow." A full accounting of these publications can be found in volume 1's "Chronological Catalog" and editorial apparatus.

2. Eller, *Becoming Ray Bradbury,* 79; Bradbury, interview with the author, Oct. 25, 2007, and Oct. 18, 2008. Lewton's *The Leopard Man* was adapted from Woolrich's *Black Alibi* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1942); in later decades, two distinguished directors with close connections to Bradbury would film Woolrich titles: Alfred Hitchcock (*Rear Window*) and François Truffaut (*The Bride Wore Black*).

3. Schwartz to Bradbury, postcard, n.d. (postmarked Mar. 18, 1943). Howard Haycraft's *Murder for Pleasure: The Life and Times of the Detective Story* (New York: Appleton–Century, 1941) offered perspectives on both the tradition and the craft of crime fiction. It's not known if Bradbury actually read the book, but during the war years he generally followed up on such recommendations from his closest advisers. At the time of Schwartz's postcard, Bradbury was entering the most intensive reading regimen of his career.

4. His subsequent rise into the major market magazines during the mid-1940s meant nothing to the people above McIlwraith and Buchanan; in early 1946, his $400 payment from *Mademoiselle* for "Homecoming" came in almost simultaneously with his $35 sale of "The Smiling People" to *Weird Tales.*

5. Bradbury to Derleth, June 15, 1946 (Wisconsin Historical Society).

6. Eller, *Becoming Ray Bradbury,* 68–69.

7. During the war his other transitional science fiction stories appeared in the fantasy prozines *Astonishing Stories* ("Subterfuge"), *Famous Fantastic Mysteries* ("King of the Gray Spaces"), and *Amazing Stories* ("I, Rocket" and "Undersea Guardians"). Volume 1's "Chronological Catalog" provides complete publishing information.

8. These dark tales, all distinct extrapolations yet sharing common terrors of despair and isolation, include (by date of publication) "The Visitor" (1948), "Perchance to Dream" ("Asleep in Armageddon," 1948), "The One Who Waits" (1949), "The Lonely

Ones" (1949), "A Blade of Grass" (1949), "Purpose" ("The City," 1950), "Death Wish" ("The Blue Bottle," 1950), and "No Particular Night or Morning" (1951).

9. Damon Knight, "Readin' and Writhin'" [review of *The Illustrated Man*], *Science Fiction Quarterly* 1.2 (Feb. 1953), 82; expanded and reprinted as "When I Was in Knee-Pants: Ray Bradbury," in Knight, *In Search of Wonder* (Chicago: Advent, 1956), 108–13.

10. Kuttner to Bradbury, July 8, 1944; Snow to Bradbury, Jan. 3, 1943 [1944], and Mar. 26, 1944.

11. Even before it was published in 1951, Bradbury's cautionary tale "The Pedestrian" had become the immediate precursor for "The Fireman," the early form of *Fahrenheit 451:* another kind of nightmare inversion, where firemen burn houses and books instead of saving them.

12. The trail of influence from Korzybski's *Science and Sanity* (1933) to Bradbury's 1943 stories is traced in the volume annotations.

13. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil,* trans. Helen Zimmern (New York: Macmillan, 1907) 97, aphorism 146.

BRADBURY CHRONOLOGY

1920 Ray Douglas Bradbury born August 22, 1920, in Waukegan, Illinois, the third child of Esther Moberg Bradbury and Leonard Bradbury. Twin boys were born four years earlier, but one, Samuel, died at age two. Leonard Jr. (known as "Skip") survived. Ray retains memories of his own birth.

1924 In February (age three), taken by mother to see Lon Chaney in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame.* Learns about radio from his paternal grandfather.

1925 Given first book of fairy tales, *Once Upon a Time,* by his Aunt Neva Bradbury for Christmas. Parents help him learn to read from the newspaper comics. Grandfather shows him pictures of the 1892 and 1903 world's fairs.

1926 Sees Lon Chaney's *Phantom of the Opera* with his mother and again with his brother Skip. Grandfather Bradbury dies, and Aunt Neva starts reading Ray the Oz books of L. Frank Baum. Begins first grade in Waukegan, but father moves family to Roswell, New Mexico, then on to Tucson, Arizona, looking for work.

1927 Ray's sister, Elizabeth, is born in Tucson. Family moves back to Waukegan in May. A young cousin almost drowns in Lake Michigan; he uses this incident much later in "The Lake."

1928 Ray's baby sister, Elizabeth, dies of pneumonia in February. Sick in bed with whooping cough, Ray misses three months of school during the fall term. Aunt Neva reads him Edgar Allan Poe's works. Discovers *Amazing Stories Quarterly,* one of the earliest science fiction pulps. Is terrified of crossing local ravine and uses this fear later in "The Night" and "The Whole Town's Sleeping," stories later novelized within *Dandelion Wine.*

1929 Discovers the romances of Edgar Rice Burroughs and begins to read Burroughs's John Carter of Mars series.

1931 Given a magic book for his eleventh birthday; attends local performances by Blackstone the Magician several times between 1928 and 1931. Performs his own magic act for various service clubs and lodges and on Christmas Eve at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall.

1932 Reads Jules Verne. Father loses his job with the telephone company and moves family back to Tucson. Receives toy dial typewriter for Christmas. Attempts a sequel to a John Carter of Mars novel. Reads Sunday comics to kids on a local radio station in Tucson.

1933 Father moves family back to Waukegan in the spring. Ray reads borrowed copies of *Wonder Stories* and *Amazing Stories.* Attends the Century of Progress Exposition (the Chicago World's Fair) that summer with his parents and again with his aunt Neva; he is fascinated by "The City of the Future" and the dinosaurs of the "Sinclair Prehistoric Exhibit."

1934 Favorite uncle Inar Moberg moves to California. Years later Ray would write a story in which he gave his uncle wings and makes him a vampire. His father, again out of work, drives family to Los Angeles. Ray attends Berendo Junior High.

1935 Ray roller-skates to Paramount Studios and collects autographs. Resumes his grade-school compilation of Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers comic strips. Starts sending stories to the *Saturday Evening Post* and other quality magazines. In September, enters Los Angeles High School.

1936 Joins drama club and determines to be an actor. Starts—but never finishes—his first novel. Poem "In Memory of Will Rogers" printed in Waukegan *News-Sun.* Two teachers, Jennet Johnson and Snow Longley Housh, encourage his creative development. He would later acknowledge their influence in his dedication to *Something Wicked This Way Comes* (1962).

1937 Discovers the novels of Thomas Wolfe. Has poem "Death's Voice" published in *Anthology of Student Verse* in March. Scripts annual high school talent show, the *1937 Roman Review.* Buys first real typewriter for $10. In early October, joins the Los Angeles Science Fiction League (LASFL).

1938 In January, his first amateur story, "Hollerbochen's Dilemma," is printed in the LASFL chapter's fan magazine (fanzine), *Imagination!* Poem "Truck Driver after Midnight" appears in citywide anthology *Morning Song.* Contributes reviews and commentary to *Blue and White Daily,* the Los Angeles High School student newspaper. Graduates in June; starts selling newspapers in September from a street corner newsstand.

1939 Launches his own fanzine, *Futuria Fantasia,* which will run for four issues. Attends the first World Science Fiction Convention in New York. Takes Hannes Bok's art portfolio with him and wins Bok his first commission from *Weird Tales.* Reads Hemingway, Steinbeck, Wolfe, and other American novelists.

1940 Sees Disney's *Fantasia* multiple times. Moves with family to downtown Los Angeles. Receives advice from Robert A. Heinlein. Publishes "It's Not the Heat, It's the Hu—" in the November 2 issue of the nonpaying

but professional *Script* magazine; this is his first professional story publication. Active in amateur productions of Laraine Day's Wilshire Players Guild.

1941 First professional story sale, "The Pendulum," written with Henry Hasse, appears in the November issue of *Super Science Stories.* His first agent, Julius Schwartz, negotiates this sale and two more before the end of the year.

1942 Sundays at Muscle Beach with Leigh Brackett, critiquing and revising stories. Publishes "The Candle" in *Weird Tales.* Moves with family to Venice Beach. Quits selling newspapers.

1943 Poor vision keeps him out of military service. Three major stories appear: "The Wind" and "The Crowd" in *Weird Tales* and "King of the Gray Spaces" in *Famous Fantastic Mysteries.*

1944 Places detective stories in *Detective Tales, New Detective,* and *Dime Mystery.* Writes second half of Leigh Brackett's novella "Lorelei of the Red Mist" while she coauthors screenplay of *The Big Sleep* for director Howard Hawks. Undertakes extensive readings of contemporary American and British fiction writers.

1945 First anthology sale, "The Lake," appears in *Who Knocks.* Sells "The Big Black and White Game" to *American Mercury.* Three major market magazine sales enable him to travel in Mexico with close friend Grant Beach. This trip results in the classic story "The Next in Line."

1946 Meets future wife Marguerite "Maggie" McClure at Fowler's Book Shop, where she clerks. First *Martian Chronicles* story, "The Million Year Picnic," appears in *Planet Stories.* "The Big Black and White Game" selected for *Best American Short Stories 1946.* Meets future agent Don Congdon.

1947 Bradbury's radio play "The Meadow" broadcast on *World Security Workshop* and selected for *Best One-Act Plays 1947–48.* His as-yet-unpublished story "Riabouchinska" adapted and broadcast on the CBS radio dramatic series *Suspense.* Marries Maggie McClure. His story "Homecoming" is selected for *O. Henry Award: Prize Stories 1947.* First story collection, *Dark Carnival,* published. Don Congdon becomes his agent.

1948 Wins third place in *O. Henry Award: Prize Stories 1948* with "Power House." "I See You Never" in *Best American Short Stories 1948. Dark Carnival* reprinted (abridged) in Great Britain.

1949 Trip to New York. Meets Walter Bradbury at Doubleday. They conceive the idea for *The Martian Chronicles.* Applies (unsuccessfully) for Guggenheim with a novel concept, *The Masks.* First daughter Susan born. Named Best Author of Science Fiction 1949 by the National Fantasy Fan Federation.

1950 *The Martian Chronicles* published in May. Now publishing regularly

in major market magazines. Receives significant review from Christopher Isherwood in *Tomorrow* for *The Martian Chronicles.*

1951 "The Fireman" published as a novella in February issue of *Galaxy;* he will later revise and expand it into *Fahrenheit 451. The Illustrated Man* is published, his second book from Doubleday. Second daughter, Ramona, born. Major interview for *New York Times Book Review* published in August.

1952 First book on Ray Bradbury, *The Ray Bradbury Review,* edited by William F. Nolan. Guest of honor at the Westercon in San Diego. "The Other Foot" published in *Best American Short Stories 1952.* Edits *Timeless Stories for Today and Tomorrow* for Bantam. *The Illustrated Man* is runner-up for the International Fantasy Award.

1953 In March *The Golden Apples of the Sun* published by Doubleday. Writes a critical piece on science fiction for *The Nation.* John Huston asks Bradbury to write the *Moby Dick* screenplay in late August; they spend the next eight months in Ireland and London as Bradbury prepares the script. His first novel, *Fahrenheit 451,* is published by Ballantine Books. "The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms" and an original screen treatment, *It Came from Outer Space,* made into films.

1954 Wins annual gold medal from Commonwealth Club of California for *Fahrenheit 451.* Wins Benjamin Franklin magazine award for best short story, "Sun and Shadow." Wins National Institute of Arts and Letters literature award for *Fahrenheit 451.* Bradbury and his family return from Europe in June.

1955 Pantheon publishes *Switch on the Night,* his first children's book, in March. First textbook appearance in *The Informal Reader* with "There Will Come Soft Rains." Third daughter, Bettina, born. *The October Country* released in October from Ballantine Books. "Shopping for Death" picked for *Best Detective Stories of the Year.*

1956 Wins Boys Club of America Award for *Switch on the Night.* Edits the Bantam anthology *The Circus of Dr. Lao and Other Improbable Stories.* Writes "Happy Birthday 2115 A.D.," an unproduced operetta, for Elsa Lanchester and Charles Laughton. John Huston's production of *Moby Dick,* filmed from Bradbury's screenplay, released as a feature film by Warner Brothers.

1957 In London for the summer. Writes screenplay of "And the Rock Cried Out" for Carol Reed. September sees release of *Dandelion Wine* from Doubleday. His father dies at age sixty-six in October.

1958 In April, receives a 1957 Society of Midland Authors award for *Dandelion Wine* as runner-up to Jessamyn West's *To See the Dreams.* Represented in *Best American Short Stories* with "The Day It Rained Forever."

Fourth daughter, Alexandra, born. The Bradburys move on Thanksgiving Day to present home in Cheviot Hills.

1959 *A Medicine for Melancholy* released in February by Doubleday. The British edition published with modified contents as *The Day It Rained Forever.*

1960 First professional stage play, *The Meadow,* produced at the Huntington Hartford Theater in Hollywood. *Life* article published in October, "A Serious Search for Weird Worlds."

1961 In January wins appellate court ruling against CBS television for a 1957 *Playhouse 90* plagiarism of *Fahrenheit 451.* Cofounds the Writer's Guild Film Society with Arthur Knight. Writes the voice-over narrative for MGM's *King of Kings* (uncredited).

1962 Major teleplay, "The Jail," appears on *Alcoa Premier* in February. His script for "The Jail" is nominated by the Writer's Guild of America for the Television and Radio Writers Award in the category of Television Anthology Drama. In the fall, *Life* publishes his article "Cry the Cosmos." Simon & Schuster publishes Bradbury's long-awaited novel, *Something Wicked This Way Comes. R Is for Rocket,* a compilation of Bradbury stories for young readers, published by Doubleday.

1963 Receives Academy Award nomination for the 1962 animated short film, *Icarus Montgolfier Wright,* adapted from his story; George Clayton Johnson and illustrator Joseph Mugnaini share the nomination. Film wins Golden Eagle Award from the Council on International Non-Theatrical Events (CINE). In October, Dial publishes Bradbury's dramatic adaptations of his own Irish stories as *The Anthem Sprinters and Other Antics.*

1964 His "American Journey" narrative opens at the U.S. Pavilion of the World's Fair in New York. Produces his own plays in Los Angeles as *The World of Ray Bradbury.* Receives the Peter Pan Award from the Department of Pediatrics, Cedars-Sinai Hospital. Simon & Schuster publishes Bradbury's short story collection *The Machineries of Joy.*

1965 *Life* publishes his fictional tribute to Hemingway in January. He produces his play *The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit* in Los Angeles. "The Other Foot" selected for *Best American Short Stories 1915–1965. The Vintage Bradbury* released by Vintage Books, Random House. Ballantine publishes *The Autumn People,* the first of two mass-market paperbacks featuring the early 1950s EC Comics graphic adaptations of Bradbury stories. Receives the first of two Ann Radcliffe Awards for contributions to Gothic Literature from the Count Dracula Society, precursor to the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Films. *The World of Ray Bradbury* has a short New York run at the Orpheum Theatre.

1966 François Truffaut's *Fahrenheit 451* distributed by Universal as a major film. *S Is for Space,* a companion collection to *R Is for Rocket,* published by Doubleday. Ballantine publishes *Tomorrow Midnight,* the second of two mass-market paperbacks featuring the early 1950s EC Comics graphic adaptations of Bradbury stories. Bradbury's mother dies at age seventy-eight in Los Angeles in November.

1967 Musical production of *Dandelion Wine* opens at Lincoln Center in April. *Life* publishes "An Impatient Gulliver above Our Roofs."

1968 Wins Aviation Space Writers Association's Robert Ball Memorial Award for "An Impatient Gulliver above Our Roofs." *Leviathan '99* produced and broadcast as a radio play by the BBC in London. Named president of the Chamber Symphony Society of California in June. August sees his final essay for *Life,* "Any Friend of Trains Is a Friend of Mine."

1969 *The Illustrated Man* distributed as a major film by Warner Brothers/Seven Arts. *I Sing the Body Electric!* released by Knopf in October. His *Christus Apollo* performed at UCLA with Charlton Heston as narrator.

1970 Works as part of WED (Disney Imagineering think-tank) on Robot Factory exhibits. "Mars Is Heaven!" ("The Third Expedition," 1948) selected for the first volume of Doubleday's *Science Fiction Hall of Fame* anthology.

1971 Apollo 15 crew names a lunar impact feature Dandelion Crater in honor of Bradbury. Participates in a panel discussion, "Mars and the Mind of Man," at California Institute of Technology. "The Poems" (1945) receives the Seiun Award for best foreign short story at the Japanese Science Fiction Convention. Receives his second Ann Radcliffe Award for contributions to Gothic Literature from the Count Dracula Society.

1972 *The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit and Other Plays* published by Bantam. Feature film *Picasso Summer,* based on his story "In a Season of Calm Weather," released by Warner Brothers/Seven Arts. "The Blue Bottle" ("Death Wish," 1950) receives the Seiun Award for best foreign short story at the Japanese Science Fiction Convention. *The Halloween Tree,* a novel for young adults, published by Knopf.

1973 First poetry book, *When Elephants Last in the Dooryard Bloomed,* released by Knopf. "The Black Ferris" (1948) receives the Seiun Award for best foreign short story at the Japanese Science Fiction Convention.

1974 Receives Valentine Davies Career Award from the Writer's Guild of America, West, for contributions to motion picture screenwriting. Records *Bradbury Reads Bradbury* with the Listening Library for high school use.

1975 *Pillar of Fire and Other Plays* published by Bantam in October.

1976 *Fahrenheit 451* (as read by Bradbury) nominated for Best Spoken Word Recording by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. *Long After Midnight* published by Knopf (his first collection in seven

years). Receives first Life Achievement nomination (for 1975) from the jurors of the World Fantasy Awards.

1977 Selected as the Life Achievement Award winner (for 1976) by jurors of the World Fantasy Awards. Receives California Association of Teachers of English Writer of the Year Award. Knopf publishes second book of verse, *Where Robot Mice and Robot Men Run Round in Robot Towns.*

1978 First nomination for the Gandalf Grand Master of Fantasy Award (for 1977), an honor sponsored by the annual Hugo Awards competition. Abrams publishes *The Mummies of Guanajuato,* a book of photos built around Bradbury's classic story "The Next in Line."

1979 Second nomination for the Gandalf Grand Master of Fantasy Award (for 1978). Receives an honorary doctorate from Whittier College. Hosts the ABC hour-long special broadcast, *Infinite Space: Beyond Apollo.*

1980 Selected as the Gandalf Grand Master of Fantasy Award winner (for 1979) on his third nomination. Receives Space Medicine Award for "Medicine for the Twenty-first Century" from NASA. Knopf releases the hundred-story collection *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* in October.

1981 Receives performance award from the Mental Health Association of Los Angeles for his contributions. His third collection of verse, *The Haunted Computer and the Android Ape,* published by Knopf.

1982 Perfection Form releases a series of his short stories in booklet format for schools.

1983 *Dinosaur Tales* published by Bantam. *Something Wicked This Way Comes* released by Disney. Bradbury's screenplay receives the Saturn Award for Writing from the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Films.

1984 Receives "Key to the City" from Waukegan, Illinois. *Novels of Ray Bradbury* published by Granada in Great Britain. Dell releases a collection of Bradbury's early detective stories as *A Memory of Murder. Fahrenheit 451* receives Prometheus Award for Best Hall of Fame Classic Fiction from the Libertarian Futurist Society; cowinner is George Orwell's *1984.*

1985 In its first season, *The Ray Bradbury Theater* receives an ACE (Award for Cable Excellence); by its final season (1993) the series would earn a total of ten ACE nominations and net six wins, as well as two Emmy nominations. First mystery novel, *Death Is a Lonely Business,* published by Knopf in October. Receives the Body of Work Award for lifetime achievement from the writer's group PEN USA.

1986 Guest of honor at World Science Fiction Convention. Dramatic Publishing releases a series of Bradbury's plays for theatrical use.

1987 St. Martin's publishes Bradbury's story *Fever Dream* as a children's glow-in-the-dark edition.

1988 Knopf releases his first story collection in nine years, *The Toynbee Convector.*

1989 Named a Grand Master by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America for his lifetime achievement in these fields. Joshua Odell Editions publishes *Zen in the Art of Writing* in March. *The Toynbee Convector* nominated for a 1988 Bram Stoker Award by the Horror Writer's Association.

1990 Portion of the Yeoman Creek ravine near Bradbury's childhood home in Waukegan, Illinois, named the Ray Bradbury section of Powell Park. Receives the Turner Tomorrow Award. Knopf publishes his second mystery novel, *A Graveyard for Lunatics.*

1991 *Ray Bradbury on Stage,* a compilation of his published stage plays, released by Donald I. Fine. *Yestermorrow!* (an essay collection) published by Joshua Odell Editions.

1992 *Green Shadows, White Whale,* a novelization of his Irish stories and his 1953 to 1954 experiences in Ireland writing the screenplay for *Moby Dick* under John Huston's direction, published by Knopf. Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature presents the Mark Twain Award to Bradbury for his distinguished contributions to midwestern literature. The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America establish The Ray Bradbury Award for excellence in screenwriting. Spacewatch project astronomers at Kit Peak observatory name a newly discovered asteroid, 9766 Bradbury, in honor of the author. Television documentary *Ray Bradbury: An American Icon* airs, with narration by Academy Award–winning actor and Bradbury friend Rod Steiger.

1993 Bradbury's feature-length animated teleplay of his 1972 novel, *The Halloween Tree,* is aired October 20, 1993, on the Turner Broadcasting Channel; subsequently released by Hanna-Barbera on video. Bradbury shares a CableACE award for *The Ray Bradbury Theater* as Best Dramatic Series; this is the last of ten ACE nominations (and six wins) for the Bradbury series.

1994 Wins an Emmy for his animated screenplay adaptation of *The Halloween Tree.*

1995 Named Los Angeles Citizen of the Year for his contributions to city planning.

1996 Receives honorary doctorate of Humane Letters from California Lutheran University. Nominated for the First Fandom Hall of Fame Award, a Hugo ceremony honor recognizing original fans from the days of the first World Science Fiction Convention of 1939. Avon Books releases *Quicker Than the Eye* (a story collection) in November. Los Angeles names a room in its main library for Ray Bradbury.

1997 *Driving Blind* (story collection) released in September by Avon.

1998 His second children's picture book, *Ahmed and the Oblivion Machines,* published by Avon. *Driving Blind* is nominated for a World Fantasy Award.

1999 Bradbury receives the George Pal Memorial Award from the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Films. The British edition of *Driving Blind* (published in 1998) nominated for a British Fantasy Award. Bradbury inducted (along with Robert Silverberg and posthumous inductees A. Merritt and Jules Verne) into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame.

2000 Awarded the National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters on November 15. In honor of this award, Morrow, now publisher of Avon Books, publishes *A Celebration of Ray Bradbury.*

2001 The World Horror Convention names Bradbury a Grand Master. July sees publication of *A Chapbook for Burnt-Out Priests, Rabbis, and Ministers* (Cemetery Dance), a collection of Bradbury's speculative writings on the cosmos and faith. *From the Dust Returned,* a novelized story cycle started more than fifty years earlier, published by Morrow. *Ray Bradbury, His Life and Work* printed by Book-of-the-Month Club in conjunction with their rerelease of four major Bradbury classics. Mayor James Hahn of Los Angeles proclaims Ray Bradbury Day for Friday, December 14.

2002 *From the Dust Returned* nominated for a Bram Stoker Award for best Horror novel; it is also nominated for a World Fantasy Award. *One More for the Road* (a story collection) published in March by Morrow. *Fahrenheit 451* becomes the "One Book, One City" selection for Los Angeles; other cities eventually select *Fahrenheit 451* for subsequent reading programs. Recognized for his contributions to film with the 2,193rd star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in April.

2003 *One More for the Road* receives the Bram Stoker Award for best fiction collection. *Bradbury Stories,* his second hundred-story compilation, published by Morrow. Maggie Bradbury passes away in November. His third mystery novel, *Let's All Kill Constance!* published by Morrow in December.

2004 *It Came From Outer Space,* a documentary edition of his four screen treatments for this film, published by Gauntlet Press. The World Science Fiction Convention awards *Fahrenheit 451* the Retro-Hugo as best novel fifty years after publication; other nominations in this category include period novels by Arthur C. Clarke, Isaac Asimov, and Theodore Sturgeon. *The Cat's Pajamas,* a story collection with a cover illustration by Bradbury, published by Morrow. Receives the National Medal of Arts from President Bush on November 17.

2005 Ray's older brother, Skip, passes away in March. *Bradbury Speaks,* a

collection of articles and essays, published in July by Morrow. *Maggie Remembered,* a tribute from Bradbury to his late wife, published by Hill House. A four-text archival edition of *The Halloween Tree* published by Gauntlet Press.

2006 The National Endowment for the Arts selects *Fahrenheit 451* for "The Big Read" national reading program. *The Homecoming* published as a children's book, illustrated by Dave McKean for Collins Design. *Farewell Summer,* the original novel from which *Dandelion Wine* was extracted, published by Morrow.

2007 *Match to Flame,* the historical collection of Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* precursors and related stories, published by Gauntlet Press. Receives the French Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Commandeur) Medal. *Now and Forever,* a pairing of the short novels *Somewhere a Band Is Playing* and *Leviathan '99,* published by Morrow. The Center for Ray Bradbury Studies opens at Indiana University, Indianapolis. On April 16, he receives a Pulitzer Prize special citation for his "prolific and deeply influential" career.

2008 Bradbury named Grand Master Poet at the Rhysling Awards for science fiction and fantasy verse. Receives the first J. Lloyd Eaton Award for Lifetime Achievement in Science Fiction, from the University of California, Riverside. *Masks,* a gathering of materials from an unpublished novel of the late 1940s, published by Gauntlet Press. *Moby Dick: A Screenplay* published by Subterranean Press from his submitted 1954 script of the John Huston film. The Center for Ray Bradbury Studies begins publication of *The New Ray Bradbury Review.* The story collection *We'll Always Have Paris* published by Morrow in December.

2009 Hill & Wang releases a graphic novel adaptation of *Fahrenheit 451.* Receives an honorary doctorate from Columbia College, Chicago.

2010 Receives ComicCon Icon Award during the Scream Awards, celebrating the history of horror, science fiction, and fantasy feature films; ceremonies aired October 19 on SPIKE TV. Bradbury's ninetieth birthday celebrated in and around Los Angeles through various events; Los Angeles City Council passes a resolution declaring August 22–28 to be Ray Bradbury Week.

2011 Hill & Wang releases a graphic novel adaptation of *Something Wicked This Way Comes.*

2012 William Morrow publishes the Bradbury tribute volume *Shadow Show,* with stories by a wide range of contemporary writers. "Take Me Home," a short essay, published in a special science fiction issue of the *New Yorker.* Bradbury dies on June 5 at Cedars Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles. The Jet Propulsion Laboratory and NASA name the Mars rover Curiosity's land-

ing zone after Bradbury on what would have been his ninety-second birthday, August 22. A Los Angeles City Council resolution renames the land across from the Los Angeles Central Library as Ray Bradbury Square.

2013 Publication of *Nolan on Bradbury,* a collection of writer and friend William F. Nolan's publications on Bradbury spanning six decades.

Sources

Donn Albright, principal Bradbury bibliographer; Jonathan R. Eller, Bradbury interviews, 1998–2012, and *Becoming Ray Bradbury* (Champagne, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011); Jonathan R. Eller and William F. Touponce, *Ray Bradbury: The Life of Fiction* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2004); The Locus Index to SF Awards (www.locusmag.com/SFAwards/Db/Locus.html); Phil Nichols, Ray Bradbury (www.bradburymedia.co.uk); William F. Nolan, *The Ray Bradbury Companion* (Detroit: Gale, 1975); David Mogen, *Ray Bradbury* (Boston: Twayne, 1986); Sam Weller, *The Bradbury Chronicles* (New York: Morrow, 2005).

THE COLLECTED STORIES OF RAY BRADBURY

Volume 2: 1943–1944

ONE

THE SEA SHELL

He wanted to get out and run, bounding over hedges, kicking tin-cans down the alley, shouting at all the windows for the gang to come and play. The sun was up and the day was bright, and here he was swaddled with bed-clothes, sweating and scowling, and not liking it at all.

Johnny Bishop sat up in bed, sniffling. Orange juice, cough-medicine and the perfume of his mother, lately gone from the room, hung in a shaft of sunlight that struck down to heat his toes. The entire lower half of the patch-work quilt was a circus banner of red, green, purple and blue. It practically yelled color into his eyes. Johnny fidgeted.

"I wanna go out," he complained softly. "Darn it. Darn it."

A fly buzzed, bumping again and again at the window-pane with a dry staccato of its transparent wings. Johnny looked at it, understanding how it wanted out, too.

He coughed a few times and decided that it was not the cough of a decrepit old man, but a youngster of eleven years who, next week this time, would be loose again to filch apples from the orchard trees or bean teacher with spit-balls.

He heard the trot of crisp footsteps in the freshly polished hall, the door opened, and mother was there. "Young man," she said, "what are you doing sitting up in bed? Lie down."

"I feel better already. Honest."

"The doctor said two more days."

"Two!" Consternation was the order of the moment. "Do I hafta be sick that long?"

Mom laughed. "Well—not *sick*. But in bed, anyway." She spanked his left cheek very lightly. "Want some more orange juice?"

"With or without medicine?"

"Medicine?"

"I know you. You put medicine in my orange juice so I can't taste it. But I taste it anyway."

"This time—no medicine."

"What's that in your hand?"

"Oh, this?" Mother held out a round, spiraled gleaming object. Johnny took it. It was hard and shiny and—pretty. "Doctor Hull dropped by a few minutes ago and left it. He thought you might have fun with it."

. . .

Johnny looked palely dubious. His small hands brushed the slick surface. "How can I have fun with it? I don't even know what it is!"

Mother's smile was better than sunshine. "It's a shell from the sea, Johnny. Doctor Hull picked it up on the Pacific shore last year when he was out there."

"Hey, that's all right. What kind of shell is it?"

"Oh, I don't know. Some form of sea life probably lived in it once, a long time ago."

Johnny's brows went up. "Lived in this? Made it a home?"

"Yes."

"Aw—really?"

She adjusted it in his hand. "If you don't believe me, listen for yourself, young man. Put this end—here—against your ear."

"Like this?" He raised the shell to his small pink ear and pressed it tight. "Now, what do I do?"

Mother smiled. "Now, if you're very quiet, and listen closely, you'll hear something very, very familiar."

Johnny listened. His ear opened imperceptibly like a small flower opening, waiting.

A titanic wave came in on a rocky shore and smashed itself down.

"The sea!" cried Johnny Bishop. "Oh, Mom! The ocean! The waves! The sea!"

Wave after wave came in on that distant, craggy shore. Johnny closed his eyes tight black and a smile folded his small face exactly in half. Wave after pounding wave roared in his small pinkly alert ear.

"Yes, Johnny," said mother. "The sea."

. . .

It was late afternoon. Johnny lay back on his pillow, cradling the sea shell in his small hands, smiling, and looking out the large window just to the right side of the bed. He had a good view of the vacant lot across the street. The kids were scuffling around over there like a cluster of indignant beetles, each one complaining, "Aw, I shot you dead first! Naw, I got *you* first! Aw, you don't play fair! I won't play unless *I* can be Captain!"

Their voices seemed so far away, lazy, drifting on a tide of sun. The sunlight was just like deep yellow, lambent water, lapping at the summer, full tide. Slow, languorous, warm, lazy. The whole world was over its head in that tide and everything was slowed down. The clock ticked slower. The street car came

down the avenue in warm metal slow motion. It was almost like seeing a motion film that is losing speed and noise. Everything was softer. Nothing seemed to count as much.

He wanted to get out and play, badly. He kept watching the kids climbing the fences, playing soft ball, roller skating in the warm languor. His head felt heavy, heavy, heavy. His eyelids were window sashes pulling down, down. The sea shell lay against his ear. He pressed it close.

Pounding, drumming, waves broke on a shore. A yellow sand shore. And when the waves went back out they left foam, like the suds of beer, on the sand. The suds broke and vanished, like dreams. And more waves came with more foam. And the sand crabs tumbled, salt-wet, scuttling brown, in the ripples. Cool green water pounding cold on the sand. The very sound of it conjured up visions; the ocean breeze soothed Johnny Bishop's small body. Suddenly the hot afternoon was no longer hot and depressing. The clock started ticking faster. The street cars clanged metal quickly. The slowness of the summer world was spanked to crisp life by the pound-pound of waves on an unseen and brilliant beach.

This sea shell would be a valuable thing in the days to come. Whenever the afternoons stretched long and tiresome, he would press it around the lobe and rim of his ear and vacation on a wind-blown peninsula far, far off.

Four thirty, said the clock. Time for medicine, said mother's exact trot in the gleaming hall.

She offered the medicine in a silver spoon. It tasted like, unfortunately–medicine. Johnny made a special kind of bitter face. Then when the taste was modified by a drink of refrigerated milk he looked up at the nice soft white face of mom and said, "Can we go to the seashore some day, huh?"

"I think we can. Maybe the Fourth of July, if your father gets his two weeks then. We can drive to the coast in two days, stay a week, and come back."

Johnny settled himself, his eyes funny. "I've never really seen the ocean, except in movies. It smells different and looks different than Fox Lake, I bet. It's bigger, and a heck of a lot better. Gosh, I wish I could go now."

"It won't be long. You children are so impatient."

"I can't help it."

. . .

Mother sat down on the bed and held his hand. The things she said he couldn't understand fully, but some of them made sense. "If I had to write a philosophy of children, I guess I'd title it impatience. Impatience with everything in life. You must have things—*right now*—or else. Tomorrow's so far away, and yesterday is nothing. You're a tribe of potential Omar Khayyams, that's what. When you're older, you'll understand that waiting, planning, being patient, are attributes of maturity; that is, of being grown up."

"I don't wanna be patient. I don't like being in bed. I want to go to the sea shore."

"And last week it was a catcher's mitt you wanted—*right now.* Please, pretty please, you said. Oh, gosh, Mom, it's elegant. It's the last one at the store."

Mom was very strange, all right. She talked some more:

"I remember, I saw a doll once when I was a girl. I told my mother about it, said it was the last one for sale. I said I was afraid it would be sold before I could get it. The truth of the matter is there were a dozen others just like it. I couldn't wait. I was impatient, too."

Johnny shifted on the bed. His eyes widened and got full of blue light. "But, Mom, I don't want to wait. If I wait too long, I'll be grown up, and then it won't be any fun."

That silenced mother. She just sort of sat there, her hands tightened, her eyes got all wet after a while, because she was thinking, maybe, to herself. She closed her eyes, opened them again, and said, "Sometimes—I think children know more about living than we do. Sometimes I think you're—right. But I don't dare tell you. It isn't according to the rules—"

"What rules, Mom?"

"Civilization's. Enjoy yourself, while you are young. Enjoy yourself, Johnny." She said it strong, and funny-like.

Johnny put the shell to his ear. "Mom. Know what I'd like to do? I'd like to be at the seashore right now, running toward the water, holding my nose and yelling, 'Last one in is a double-darned monkey!'" Johnny laughed.

The phone rang downstairs. Mother walked to answer it.

Johnny lay there, quietly, listening.

• • •

Two more days. Johnny tilted his head against the shell and sighed. Two more whole days. It was dark in his room. Stars were caught in the square glass corrals of the big window. A wind moved the trees. Roller skates rotated, scraping, on the cement sidewalks below.

Johnny closed his eyes. Downstairs, silverware was being clattered at the dinner table. Mom and Pop were eating. He heard Pop laughing his deep laughter.

The waves still came in, over and over, on the shore inside the sea shell. And—something else.

"Down where the waves lift, down where the waves play, down where the gulls swoop low on a summer's day—"

"Huh?" Johnny listened. His body stiffened. He blinked his eyes.

Softly, way off:

"Stark ocean sky, sunlight on waves. Yo ho, heave ho, heave ho, my braves—"

It sounded like a hundred voices singing to the creak of oar-locks.

"Come down to the sea in ships—"

And then another voice, all by itself, soft against the sound of waves and ocean wind. "Come down to the sea, the contortionist sea, where the great tides wrestle and swell. Come down to the salt in the glittering brine, on a trail that you'll soon know well—"

Johnny pulled the shell from his head, stared at it.

"Do you want to come down to the sea, my lad, do you want to come down to the sea? Well, take me by the hands, my lad, just take me by the hand, my lad, and come along with me!"

Trembling, Johnny clamped the shell to his ear again, sat up in bed, breathing fast. His small heart leaped and hit the wall of his chest.

Waves pounded, crashing on a distant shore.

"Have you ever seen a fine conch-shell, shaped and shined like a pearl corkscrew? It starts out big and it ends up small, seemingly ending with nothing at all, but, aye lad, it ends where the sea-cliffs fall; where the sea-cliffs fall to the blue!"

Johnny's fingers tightened on the circular marks of the shell. That was right. It went around and around and around until you couldn't see it going around any more.

Johnny's lips tightened. What was it Mother had said? Children. The—the philosophy—what a big word! of children! Impatience. Impatience! Yes, yes, he was impatient! Why not? His free hand clenched into a tiny hard white fist, pounding against the quilted covers.

"Johnny!"

Johnny yanked the shell from his ear, hid it quickly under the sheets. Father was coming down the hall from the stairs.

"Hi there, son."

"Hi, Dad!"

Mother and father were fast asleep. It was long after midnight. Very softly Johnny extracted the precious shell from under the covers and raised it to his ear.

Yes. The waves were still there. And far off, the creaking of oar-locks, the snap of wind in the stomach of a mainsail, the singing chant of boatmen faintly drifting on a salt sea wind.

He held the shell closer and yet closer.

• • •

Mother's footsteps came along the hall. She turned in at Johnny's room. "Good morning, son! Wake yet?"

The bed was empty. There was nothing but sunlight and silence in the room. Sunlight lay abed, like a bright patient with its brilliant head on the pillow. The quilt, a red-blue circus banner, was thrown back. The bed was wrinkled like the face of a pale old man, and it was very empty.

Mother looked at it and scowled and stamped her crisp heel. "Darn that little scamp!" she cried, to nobody. "Gone out to play with those neighbor ruffians, sure as the day I was born! Wait'll I catch him, I'll—" She stopped and smiled. "I'll love the little scamp to death. Children are so—impatient."

Walking to the bedside she began brushing, adjusted the quilt into place when her knuckles rapped against a lump in the sheet. Reaching under the quilt she brought forth a shining object into the sun.

She smiled. It was the sea shell.

She grasped it, and, just for fun, lifted it to her ear. Her eyes widened. Her jaw dropped.

The room whirled around in a bright swaying merry-go-round of bannered quilts and glassed sun.

The sea shell roared in her ear.

Waves thundered on a distant shore. Waves foamed cool on a far off beach.

Then the sound of small feet crunching swiftly in the sand. A high young voice yelling:

"Hi! Come on, you guys! Last one in is a double-darned monkey!"

And the sound of a small body diving, splashing, into those waves. . . .

TWO

EVERYTHING INSTEAD OF SOMETHING (DOODAD)

There was a crowd pressed together in front of the Shop.

Crowell light-footed it into that crowd, his face long and sad. He cast a glance back over one lean shoulder, muttered to himself, and widened a lane through the people, quick.

A hundred yards back of him a low shining black beetle-car hummed to the curb. A door clicked open, and the fat man with the grey-white face climbed heavily out, his expression one of silent, dead-pan hatred. Two bodyguards sat in the front seat.

Gyp Crowell wondered why he bothered running away. He was tired. Tired of trying to tell news over the audio every night and waking up every morning with gangsters at his heels just because he had mentioned the fact that "a certain fat man has been doing some dishonest finagling of Plastics, Inc."

Now, here was the fat man himself. That black beetle-car had trailed Crowell from Pasadena all the way here.

Crowell lost himself in the crowd. He wondered vaguely why this crowd should be so curious about the Shop. Certainly it was unusual, but so is everything else in Southern California. He broke through the inner circle, looked up at the large scarlet lettering over the blue glass windows, stared at it without a flicker of expression on his lean, perpetually sad face:

. . .

The sign on the Shop said:

THINGUMABOBS DOODADS WHATCHAMACALLITS HINKIES FORMODALDAFRAYS HOOTINANNIES GADGETS DOOHINGIES

. . .

Crowell took it in a dead calm. So this was the assignment his audio editor had given him to cover? Small-time screwpot stuff. Should be handled by a cub reporter. Nuts.

Then he thought about Steve Bishop, the fat man with the guns and the bodyguards. Any old port in a storm.

Crowell drew out a small transpara pad, scribbled down a few of those names—doohingies, hinkies—realizing that Bishop couldn't shoot him in this mob. Sure, maybe he had a right to shoot, after that threatened exposé and the blackmail Gyp was using against Bishop: the three-dimensional color images—

Crowell eased over to the translucent door of the Shop, pushed it, and followed it in. He'd be safe in here, and doing his routine news assignment, too.

Brilliant light flushed the interior of the Shop; pouring over a cold blue-and-white color scheme. Crowell felt chilly. Counting seventeen display cases, he investigated their contents at random, dead-grey eyes flicking passionlessly.

A very tiny man popped out from behind a blue glass case. He was so tiny and bald that Crowell had to repress a desire to pat him upon the head in fatherly fashion. That bald head was made for patting.

The tiny man's face was quite square and a peculiar yellowed tint, as if it had been aged much in the same manner as an old newspaper. "Yes?" he said.

Crowell said "Hello" quietly, taking his time. Now that he was in here he had to say something. So he said, "I want to buy a . . . a doohingey." His voice struck the same tiredly grieved note his face expressed.

"Fine, fine," said the tiny man. He dry-washed his hands. "I don't know why, but you're the first customer. The other people just stand out there and laugh at my Shop. Now—what year doohingey will you have? And what model?"

Crowell didn't know. He knew only surprise, but his face didn't show it. he'd begun his inquiry as if he knew all about it. Now was no time to confess ignorance. He pretended to muse over the problem and finally said, "I guess a 1973 model would do. Nothing too modern."

The tiny proprietor blinked. "Ah. Ah, I see you are a man of precise decision and choice. Step right this way." And he scuttled down an aisle, to pause before a large case in which reclined a—something.

It may have been a crankshaft, and yet it resembled a kitchen shelf with several earrings dangling along a metal edge which supported three horn-shaped attachments and six mechanisms Crowell couldn't recognize, and a thatch of tentacles resembling shoelaces poured out of the top.

Crowell made a throat noise, as if strangling on a button. Then he looked again. He decided that the tiny man was an utter idiot; but he kept this decision sealed in his gaunt brain.

As for the little proprietor, he was standing in a perfect ecstasy of happiness, eyes shining, lips parted in a warm smile, hands clasped over his chest, bending forward expectantly.

"Do you like it?" he asked.

Crowell nodded gravely. "Ye-ess. Ye-ess, I guess it's all right. I've seen better models, though."

"Better!" the little man exclaimed. He drew himself up. "Where?" he demanded. "Where!"

Crowell could have gotten flustered. He didn't. He simply took out his note pad, scribbled in it, kept his eyes on it and said cryptically, "*You* know where—" hoping this would satisfy the man.

It did.

"Oh!" gibbered the proprietor. "Then *you* know, too. How fine to deal with a connoisseur. How fine."

Crowell flicked a glance out the window, past the chuckling crowd. The fat man and his bodyguards and the black beetle-car were gone. They had given up the chase for a while.

Crowell whipped his pad into his pocket, put his hand on the case with the doohingey in it. "I'm in a great hurry. Could I take it with me? I haven't money, but I'll make a down payment in trade. All right?"

"Perfectly all right."

"O. K." Crowell, with some misgiving, reached into his loose-fitting grey blouse and drew forth a metal apparatus, an old pipe cleaner that had seen better days. It was broken and bent into a weird shape. "Here you are. A hinkie. A 1944 model hinkie."

"Oh." The little man exhaled dismay. He stared with horror at Crowell. "Why, that's not a hinkie!"

"Uh . . . isn't it?"

"No, of course not."

"Of course not," repeated Crowell carefully.

"It's a whatchamacallit," said the little man, blinking. "And not a whole one, either; just part of one. You like your little joke, don't you, Mr.—"

"Crowell. Yeah. My little joke. Yeah. If you don't mind. Trade? I'm in a great hurry."

"Yes, yes. I'll load it on a skate platform so we can roll it out to your car. One moment."

The tiny man moved swiftly, procuring a small wheeled truck, onto which he transferred the doohingey. He helped Crowell roll it to the door. Crowell stopped him at the door. "Just a moment." He looked out. The black beetle-car was nowhere in sight. Good. "O. K."

The little man's voice was soft with caution. "Just remember, Mr. Crowell—please don't go around killing people with this doohingey. Be . . . be selective. Yes, that's it, be selective and discerning. Remember, Mr. Crowell?"

Crowell swallowed a number-ten-size lump in his throat.

"I'll remember," he said, and hurriedly finished the deal.

• • •

He took the low-level avenue tube out of the Wilshire district heading for his home in Brentwood. Nobody trailed him. He was sure of that. He didn't know what Bishop's plans for the next few hours might be. He didn't know. He

didn't care. He was in the middle of another pall of melancholy. It was a lousy, screwball world, in which everybody had to be dishonest to get along. That fat slug of a Bishop, he—

The contraption on the seat beside him drew his attention. He looked at it with a little shaking dry laugh coming out of his mouth.

"So you're a doohingey?" he said. "Huh. Everybody to their own special racket. Bishop and his plastics, me and my blackmail, and that little dope with the doodads and hingdooies. At that, I think the little guy is the smartest."

He turned his white beetle-car off the sub-branch tube and went down a side tunnel that came up under his block. Garaging his car and scanning the surrounding park carefully, he lugged the doohingey upstairs, opened the dial door, went in, closed the door, and set the doohingey on the table. He poured himself a few fingers of brandy.

A moment later someone rapped softly, quietly and very slowly on the door. No use putting it off. Crowell answered and opened it.

"Hello, Crowell."

The fat man at the door had a face like cooked pork, cold and flabby. His eyelids drooped over red-veined, green-irised eyes. He had a cigar in his mouth that moved with his words.

"Glad you're home, Crowell. Been waiting to see you."

Crowell backed up and the fat man came in. The fat man sat down, put his hands over his round belly and said, "Well?"

Crowell swallowed. "I haven't got the images here, Bishop."

The fat man didn't say anything. He unlocked his two hands slowly, reached into his pocket as if to get a handkerchief and brought out a small paralysis gun instead. Cold blue steel.

"Change your mind, Crowell?"

Crowell's sad white face looked all sadder with cold sweat on it. His throat muscles lengthened. He tried to get his brain working, but it was locked in cement, hard and hot and furiously, suddenly afraid. It didn't show through to the outside. He saw Bishop, the gun, the room joggling up and down in his vision.

And then he saw the . . . the doohingey.

Bishop shifted the safety stud on the gun. "Where'll you have it? Head or chest. They say you die quicker if they paralyze your brain first. I prefer touching the heart with it, myself. Well?"

"Wait a moment," said Crowell carelessly. He made himself draw back a slow pace. He sat down, all the while realizing that Bishop's finger was quavering on a hair trigger. "You're not going to kill me; you're going to thank me for letting you in on the greatest invention of our time."

Bishop's huge face didn't change a line or muscle. His cigar waggled. "Snap it, Crowell. I haven't time for greasing the tongue."

"Plenty of time," said Crowell, calmly. "I've got a perfect murder weapon for you. Believe it or not, I have. Take a look at that machine sitting on the table."

The gun remained firm, blue steel. Bishop's eyes slid to one side of his face, jerked back. "So what?" he said.

"So if you listen to me you can be the biggest plastics boss to ever hit the Pacific coast. You want that, don't you?"

Bishop's eyes widened a microscopic trifle, narrowed. "Are you stalling me for time?"

"Look, Bishop, I know when I'm cooked. That's why I'm cutting you in on . . . on that damned doohingey of mine."

"On that *what?*"

"I just call it a doohingey. Haven't got a name for it yet." Crowell's brain was rotating, throwing ideas off one after another with the heated centrifuge of desperation. One idea stuck. *Keep Bishop stalled until you have a chance to get his gun. Bluff him. Bluff him like hell. Now—*

Crowell cleared his throat. "It . . . it's a radio killer," he lied. "All I have to do is give it directions and it'll kill anyone. No mess. No nothing. No clues. Perfect crime, Bishop. Interested?"

Bishop shook his head. "You been drinking. It's getting late—"

"Hold on," said Crowell, suddenly tensing forward, his grey eyes bright. "Don't move, Bishop. I've got you covered. That machine is trained on you. Before you came in I set it to a certain frequency. One squeak out of you and it'll nail you!"

Bishop's cigar fell to the floor. The gun hand wavered.

Crowell saw his chance. His lean muscles bunched into one tight, compact coil. His mouth opened, words darted out. "Watch it, Bishop! All right, machine, do your stuff! Kill Bishop!"

And with that, Crowell catapulted himself. He felt himself leave the chair, saw the startled look on Bishop's face. The misdirection had worked. The gun went off. The silver beam sizzled past Crowell's ear and splashed on the wall. Crowell snatched with both hands to clutch Bishop, get the gun.

But Crowell never got to Bishop.

Bishop was dead.

The doohingey got there first.

• • •

Crowell had a drink. Then he had another. His stomach was floating in the stuff. But he still couldn't forget how Bishop looked—dead.

Bishop had died—how? He had been sort of stabbed, shot, strangled, electrocuted—he'd been . . . uh . . . you know what I mean? He was sort of—dead. Yeah, that's it. Dead.

Crowell had another drink just on account of that. He looked at the bedroom wall and decided that sometime in the next minutes those bodyguards would be busting in up here, looking for their boss. But Crowell couldn't stand the thought of going in the living room to see where Bishop lay on the floor next to the—doohingey. He shivered.

After two more drinks that didn't even touch his mind, he got around to packing some of his clothes. He didn't know where he was going, but he was going. He was about to leave the house when the audio made a gonging noise.

"Yes?"

"Mr. Crowell?"

"Talking."

"This is the little man at the Doodads Shop."

"Oh, yeah. Hello."

"Would you mind dropping by the Shop again? And please bring the doohingey with you, yes? I fear that I've short-changed you on that model. I have another one here that is much better."

Crowell's voice got caught in his throat. "This one seems to be working fine."

He cut the contact and held onto his brains with both hands so they couldn't slide down into his shoes. He hadn't planned on killing anybody. He didn't like the idea. And that put him on the spot even more than before. Those gunmen bodyguards wouldn't stop now until—

His jaw stiffened. Let them come after him. He wasn't running away this time. He was staying in town, doing his news work as if nothing had happened. He was tired of the whole business. He didn't care if he got shot now or not. He'd even laugh with joy when they were shooting.

No use making unnecessary trouble, though. He'd carry the fat man's—body—down to the garage, put it in the back seat of the white beetle, and drive past some lonely spot, bury it, and hold the bodyguards off by telling them he had kidnapped Bishop. Yeah, that was a good idea. Clever man this Crowell.

"All right—" He tried to lift Bishop's tremendous body. He couldn't. He finally got the body downstairs to the beetle, though—the doohingey did it.

Crowell stayed upstairs until the job was done. He didn't like to watch the doohingey at work with a dead body.

. . .

"Ah, Mr. Crowell." The little proprietor opened the gleaming glass door. There was still a small crowd outside. "I see you brought the doohingey. Good."

Crowell set the contraption on the counter, thinking quickly to himself. Well. Now maybe explanations would be made. He'd have to be subtle; no blunt questions. He'd—

"Look, Mr. Whosis, I didn't tell you, but I'm an audio reporter. I'd like to broadcast a story about you and your Shop for the Audio-News. But I'd like it in your own words."

"You know as much about the thingumabobs as I do," replied the little man.

"Do I?"

"That's the impression you gave me—"

"Oh, sure. Sure I do. But it's always better when we quote somebody. See?"

"Your logic is nebulous, but I shall co-operate. Your listeners will probably want to know all about my Doodad Shop, eh? Well, it took thousands of years of traveling to make it grow."

"Miles," corrected Crowell.

"Years," stated the little man.

"Naturally," said Crowell.

"You might call my Shop the energy result of misconstrued improper semantics. These instruments might well be labeled 'Inventions That Do Everything Instead Of Something.'"

"Oh, of course," said Crowell, blankly.

"Now, when a man shows another man a particular part of a beetle-car's automotive controls and he can't recall the proper label for that part, what does he do?"

Crowell saw the light. "He calls it a doodad or a hingey or a whatchamacallit. Right?"

"Correct. And if a woman, talking to another woman about her washing machine or egg beater or knitting or crocheting and *she* had a psychological blocking, forgets the proper semantic label, what does *she* say?"

"She says 'Take this hungamabob and trinket the turndel with it. You grasp the dipsy and throw it over the flimsy,'" said Crowell, like a school kid suddenly understanding mathematics.

"Correct!" cried the little man. "All right, then. Therefore we have the birth of incorrect semantic labels that can be used to describe anything from a hen's nest to a motor-beetle crankcase. A doohingey can be the name of a scrub mop or a toupee. It's a term used freely by everybody in a certain culture. A doohingey isn't just one thing. It's a thousand things.

"Well, now, what I have done is form into energy the combined total of all things a doohingey has ever referred to. I have entered the minds of innumerable civilized humans, extracted their opinion of what *they* call a doohingey, what *they* call a thingum, and created from raw atomic energy a physical contraption of those mentally incorrect labelings. In other words, my inventions are three-dimensional representations of a semantic idea. Since the minds of people make a doohingey anything from a carpet sweeper to a number-nine-size

nut-and-bolt, *my* inventions follow the same pattern. The doohingey you carried home today could do almost anything you would want it to do. Many of the inventions have robotlike functions, due to the fact that the abilities of movement, thought and mechanical versatility were included in them."

"They can do everything?"

"Well, not everything. Most of the inventions have about sixty different processes, all alien, all mixed, all shapes, sizes, molded into them. Each one of my creations has a different set of services. Some are big. Some small. Some of the big ones have many, many services. The small ones have only one or two simple functions. Not two are alike. Think of the space and time and money you save by buying a doohingey!"

"Yeah," said Crowell. He thought about Bishop's body. "Your doohingey is certainly versatile, all right."

. . .

"That reminds me," said the little man. "About that 1944 model hinkie you sold me in trade. Where did you get it?"

"Get it? You mean that pipe cle—I mean, the hinkie? I— Oh, well, I—"

"You don't have to be secretive. We share trade secrets, you know. Did you make it yourself?"

"I . . . I bought it and worked on it. The . . . the power of thought, you know."

"Then you *know* the secret? How astonishing! I thought I was the only one who knew about the transmission of thought into energy forms. Brilliant man. Did you study in Rruhre?"

"No. I was always sorry I never got there. Never had the opportunity. I had to struggle along alone. Look, I'd like to turn this doohingey in for another apparatus. I don't like it."

"You don't like it? Why not?"

"Oh, I just don't. Too cumbersome. Give me something simple every time."

Yeah, simple, he thought, something you can see how it works.

"What kind of machine do you want this time, Mr. Crowell?"

"Give me a . . . gadget."

"What year gadget?"

"Does that make a great deal of difference, what year?"

"Oh, you're joking again, aren't you?"

Crowell swallowed. "I'm joking."

"You know, of course, that in each year for thousands of years that the type of gadget and the name for a gadget would be different. A thingooey of the year 1965 would be an oddsblodkins in 1492. Or a ettubrutus in the days of Caesar."

"Are *you* joking?" asked Crowell. "No. Never mind. Give me my gadget and I'll go home."

That word "home" startled Crowell. It wouldn't be wise to go there just yet. Hide out for a while until he could send a message to the bodyguard saying that he was holding Bishop a prisoner. Yes. That was it. That was safest.

In the meantime he was curious about this Shop, but not curious enough to have horrible contraptions like that doohingey near him. The little man was talking:

"I've a whole case full of thingumabobs from all historical periods I'll give you," he was saying. "I'm so overstocked with stuff, and nobody but you takes me seriously so far. I haven't made one sale today. It's quite saddening."

Crowell felt sorry for the man, but—"Tell you what. I've got an empty storage room in my house. Send the stuff around in a few days and I'll look it over and take what I like."

"Can't you take some of it with you now?" pleaded the little man.

"I don't think I can—"

"Oh, it's small. Very small stuff. Really. Here, I'll show you. A few little boxes of trinkets and knickknacks. Here. Here they are." He bent behind a counter, brought out six boxes, enough to load Crowell's arms up to the chin.

Crowell opened one box. "Sure. I'll take these. Nothing but soup strainers, paring knives, lemon juicers, doorknobs and old meerschaum pipes from Holland. Sure, I'll take *these.*" They looked safe. They were small, simple. Nothing wrong with them.

"Oh, thank you. Thank you. Put these in the back of your beetle, gratis. I'm glad to clean them out of the store. I've done so much energy creating in the last few years or so I'll be relieved to get rid of them. Sick and tired of looking at them. There you go."

. . .

Crowell, his arms full, staggered out to his white beetle and tossed the stuff in the back seat. He waved to the little man, said he'd see him again in a few days, and drove off.

The hour spent in the Shop, the gibbering joy of the little man, the bright lights, had made him forget, for the time, about Bishop's bodyguards and Bishop himself.

The beetle-car hummed under him. He headed downtown toward the Audio studios, trying to decide what was wisest to do. He reached back, curiously, and pulled out one of the little gadgets. It was nothing more nor less than a pipe. Seeing it, made him hungry for a smoke, so he took the pipe, filled it with makings from his blouse pouch, and lit it, experimentally, carefully. He puffed smoke. Fine. A good pipe.

He was busy enjoying the pipe when he noticed something in the rear-view

mirror. He was being followed by two black beetle-cars. Not mistaking those low ebony high-powered crawlers.

He cursed silently and put on speed. The beetles were catching up with him, gaining speed every instant. There were two thugs in one of them, and two in the other.

"I'll stop and tell them that I'm holding their boss as hostage," said Crowell to himself.

There were guns gleaming in the hands of the thugs in the black cars.

Crowell realized that they would shoot first and talk later. He hadn't planned that. He had planned on hiding away and calling them and giving them his ultimatum. But—*this!* They were coming after him. He wouldn't have a chance to explain before they'd shoot him down.

He increased the speed with his foot. Sweat came out to play on his forehead. What a mess. He was beginning to wish he hadn't returned the doohingey to the Shop. He could use it now, just as he had inadvertently used it on Bishop.

Doohingey! Gadgets!

Crowell cried out in relief. Maybe—

He reached into the back seat and scrabbled wildly among the litter of gadgets. None of them looked like they could do anything, but he'd try, anyhow.

"O. K., you thingums, do your stuff! Protect me, damn you!"

There was a rattling crisp noise and something metallic thumped past Crowell's ears, winged outside on transparent glass wings back in the direction of the pursuing enemy car and hit it head on.

There was an explosion of green fire and grey smoke.

The fraltamoret had done its work. It was a combination of a little boy's automatic airplane and an explosive projectile.

Crowell pressed the floor plate and shot his beetle ahead again. The second car was still pursuing. They wouldn't give up.

"Get them!" cried Crowell. "Get them, too! Get them any way you can!" He dumped two boxes of trinkets out the window. Several of them took flight. The others bounced harmlessly on the cement.

Two missiles glittered in the air. They looked like old-fashioned pinking shears, sharp and bright, and an antigravity main-mechanistic drive attached. They sang along the boulevard until they got to the remaining black beetle-car.

They went in through the open windows, gleaming.

The black beetle-car lost its control and went off the avenue, turning over and over, smashing, and bursting into a sudden savage fire.

. . .

Crowell slumped in his seat. He let the beetle slow down and pull around a corner and over to the curb, stopping. He was breathing fast. His heart crashed.

He could go home now, if he wanted to. There would be no one else waiting for him at home, waiting to ambush him, stop him, question him, threaten him.

He could go home now. Funny, but he didn't feel relieved or happy. He just felt dark, unhappy, ill at ease. The world was a lousy place to live in. He had a bitter taste in his mouth.

He drove home. Well, maybe things would be better. Maybe.

He took the remaining boxes of trinkets and got out of the beetle and took the vac-elevator upstairs. He opened the door and laid the boxes down and sorted through them.

He still had that pipe in his mouth, after all the excitement. He had picked it up automatically and put it back in his mouth. He was nervous. Needed another smoke now to quiet his mind.

He put fresh tobacco in his new pipe and puffed it into life. That little man was a screw for giving him all this stuff. Dangerous to have this sort of knowledge lying around in the world. All kinds of wrong people might get hold of it, use it.

He laughed, and puffed at his pipe.

From now on, he'd play big shot. With the help of the little man and the Shop, he'd make those big Plastics officials jump, pay him money, obey his every thought. Damn them.

It sounded like a lot of trouble, though. He sat down and scowled and brooded about it and his thoughts got dark, like they had been for so many years. Pessimistic.

What was the use of trying to do anything in this world? Why did he bother to go on living? He got so tired.

Sometimes, like tonight and so many nights in the long years, he felt that it might be a good idea if those gunmen caught up with him and filled him full of paralysis. Sometimes, if he had a gun in his own fingers, *he'd blast his brains out.*

There was a sharp explosion. Crowell stood up suddenly. He stiffened and fell down on his knees.

He'd forgotten about the pipe in his mouth—forgotten it was a thingumabob gadget.

It took an unpleasantly fatal way of reminding him.

THREE

THE DUCKER

The transport was loaded, ready to leave at midnight. Feet shuffled up long wooden gangplanks. A lot of songs were being sung. A lot of silent goodbyes were being said to New York Harbor. Military insignia flashed in the loading lights. . . .

Johnny Choir wasn't afraid. His khaki-clad arms trembled with excitement and uncertainty, but he wasn't afraid. He held on to the railing and thought. The thinking came down over him like a bright shell, cutting out the soldiers, the transport, the noise. He thought about the days that had slipped by him.

A few years before—

Days in the green park, down by the creek, under the shady oaks and elms, near the grey-planked benches and the bright flowers. The kids, he among them, came like an adolescent avalanche down the tall hillsides, yelling, laughing, and tumbling.

Sometimes they'd have carven hunks of wood with clothes-pins from the wash-line for triggers; rubber bands, snapped and flicked through the summer air, for ammunition. Sometimes they'd have cap-guns, exploding pointedly at one another. And most of the time when they couldn't afford powder-caps, they just pointed their dime revolvers at one another and shouted:

"Bang! You're dead!"

"Bang-bang—I gotcha!"

It wasn't simple as all that, though. Arguments rose, quick, hot, short, and over in a minute.

"Bang, I gotcha!"

"Aw, you missed me a mile! *Boom!* There, I got *you!*"

"Oh, no you didn't either! How could you get me? You were shot. You were dead. You couldn't shoot me."

"I already said you missed me. I ducked."

"Aw, you can't duck a bullet. I pointed right at you."

"I *still* ducked."

"Nuts. You always say that, Johnny. You don't play right. You're shot. You gotta lay down!"

"But I'm the sergeant—I can't die."

"Well, I'm better than a sergeant. I'm a captain."

"If you're a captain, then I'm a general!"

"*I'm* a major-general!"

"I quit. You don't play fair."

The eternal wrangling for position, the bloody noses and hoarse name-calling, the promised retribution of "I'll tell my Dad on you." All of it a part and parcel of being a wild horseling of eleven, with the bit out of your buck-toothed mouth all during June and July and August.

. . .

And only in autumn did the parents ride out after you and the other fiery colts, to rope you and brand you behind the ears with soap and water and chuck you off to that corral with the red-brick walls and the rusty bell in the tower. . . .

That wasn't so long ago. Just—seven years.

He was still a kid inside. His body had grown, stretched, towered, tanned its skin, hardened its muscle, darkened its tawny shock of long hair, tightened its lines around jaw and eyes, thickened fingers and knuckles, but the brain didn't feel as if it had grown in sympathy with the rest. It was still green; full of tall lush oaks and elms in summer; a creek ran through it, and the kids climbed around on its convolutions shouting, "This way, gang—we'll take a short-cut and head them off at Dead Man's Gulch!"

Boat whistles blew their tops. Manhattan's metal buildings tossed back an echo of them. Gangplanks clattered up and away. Men's voices shouted.

Johnny Choir was aware of it, suddenly. His wild, quick thoughts were stampeded by the reality of the ship nosing out into the harbor. He felt his hands trembling on the cold iron rail. Some of the boys sang "It's a Long Way to Tipperary." They made a lot of warm noise.

"Come out of it, Choir," someone said. Eddie Smith came and brushed Johnny Choir's elbow. "Penny for your thoughts."

Johnny looked at all that dark, glittering water. "Why ain't I in 4-F?" he said simply.

Eddie Smith looked at the water, too, and laughed. "Why?"

Johnny Choir said, "I'm only a kid. I'm only ten years old. I like ice-cream cones and candy bars and roller skates. I want my mama."

Smith rubbed his small white chin.

"You got the most distorted sense of humor, Choir. So help me. You say all you got to say with the perfect dead-pan expression. Someone else might think you were serious. . . ."

Johnny spit slowly over the side, experimentally, to see how long it would take the spit to reach the water. Not long. Then he tried to watch where it landed to see how long he could still see it. Not long, either.

Smith said, "Here we go. Don't know where, but we're going. Maybe England, maybe Africa, maybe Who Knows?"

"Do—do those other guys play fair, Private Smith?"

"Huh?"

Johnny Choir gestured. "If you shoot those other guys over there, then they got to fall down, don't they?"

"Hell, yes. But, why—"

"And they can't shoot back if they get shot first."

"That's a basic fact of war. You shoot the other guy first, he's out of the fight. Now, why are you—"

"That's all right then," said Johnny Choir. His stomach eased down soft and nice inside him. Resting light and smooth, his hands didn't twitch on the rail any more.

"As long as that is a basic rule, Private Smith, then I got nothing to be afraid of. I'll play. I'll play war good."

Smith stared at Johnny.

"If you play war like you talk war, it's gonna be a funny kind of war, I'll say so."

The sound of the boat whistle hit against the clouds. The ship cut out of New York Harbor under the stars.

And Johnny Choir slept like a teddy-bear all that night. . . .

. . .

The African landing was warm, fast, simple, uneventful. Johnny lugged his equipment in his big easy-swinging hands, found his assigned company truck and the long hot delivery inland from Casablanca began. He sat tallest in his row, facing another row of friends in the rear of the truck. They bounced, jiggled, laughed, smoked, joked all along the way, and it was quite a bit of fun.

One thing Johnny Choir noticed was how nice the officers were to one another. None of the officers stomped their feet and cried, "I want to be general or I won't play!" "I want to be captain or *I* won't play!" They took orders, gave orders, rescinded orders and asked for orders in a crisp military fashion that seemed, to Johnny, to be the finest bit of play acting ever. It seemed a hard thing to act that way all the time, but they did. Johnny admired them for it and never questioned their right to give him orders. Whenever he didn't know what to do, they told him. They were helpful. Heck. They were okay. Not like in the old days when everybody argued about who was going to be general or sergeant or corporal.

Johnny said nothing of his thoughts to anyone. Whenever he had time he just kept them and mulled them over. It was so bewildering. This was the biggest game he had ever played—uniforms, bigger guns and everything and—

The long dusty trip inland over jolting roads and glorified cowpaths was little more than bumps, shouts and sweat to Johnny Choir. This didn't smell like

Africa. It smelled like sun, wind, rain, mud, heat, sweat, cigarettes, trucks, oil, gasoline. Universal odors that denied all the Dark menace of the old geography book Africa. He looked hard but he didn't see any colored men with juju paint on their black faces. The rest of the time he was too engrossed spooning food into his mouth, and coming down the hash-line for second helpings.

It was one hot noon one hundred miles from the Tunisian border, with Johnny just finishing his lunch, when a German Stuka fell out of the sun, coming right for Johnny. It spit bullets.

Johnny stood there and watched it. Tin plates, eating utensils, helmets clattered, shining, on the hard-packed sand as the other company members scattered, yelling, and dug their noses into ditches and behind boulders, behind trucks and jeeps.

Johnny stood there grinning the kind of grin you always use when you look straight at the sun. Someone yelled, "Choir, duck!"

The dive bomber strafed, slugging, punching. Johnny stood straight up with his spoon raised to his mouth. Little pocks exploded dust into a showered line a few feet to one side of him. He watched the line tiptoe instantly by him and go spattering on a few yards before the Stuka lifted gilded wings and went away.

Johnny watched it out of sight.

Eddie Smith peered over the edge of a jeep. "Choir, you nut. Why didn't you get behind the truck?"

Johnny ate again. "That guy couldn't hit the side of a barn-door with a bucket of paint."

Smith looked at him as if he were a Saint in a niche in a church. "You're either the bravest guy I know or the dumbest."

"I guess maybe I'm brave," said Johnny though his voice sounded a bit uncertain, as if he couldn't make up his mind yet.

Smith snorted. "Hell. The way you talk."

. . .

The inland movement continued. Rommel was entrenched at Mareth and the British 8th was drawing up, readying its heavy artillery for a barrage that, rumor had it, would start in approximately five days. The long queue of trucks reached the Tunisian border, ground over and up into hill country . . . .

The Afrika Korps had stormed through Kasserine Pass almost to the border of Tunisia, and now they were retreating back toward Gafsa.

"That's swell," was all Johnny Choir would say. "That's the way it should be."

Choir's infantry moved up at long last for their first engagement. Their first look at the way the enemy ran, fell down, got up or stayed down for a longer interval, flew, shot, yelled or just plain vanished in a cumulus of dust.

A certain laughing tenseness went through the members of his unit. Johnny

felt it and couldn't figure it out. But he pretended to be tense, too, once in a while. It was fun. He didn't smoke the cigarettes offered him.

"They make me choke," he explained.

Now the orders were given. American units, coming down onto Tunisian plain, would drive toward Gafsa. Johnny Choir was going with them in his role as buck private.

Instructions were barked out, maps were supplied to company commanders, tank groups, anti-tank half-tracks, artillery, infantry.

The air arm swung, shining hard, overhead. Johnny thought they looked mighty pretty.

Things started exploding. The hot plainland was running over with a lethal tide of snipers' shots, machine-gun fire, artillery blasts. And Johnny Choir ran along behind a screen of advancing tanks with Eddie Smith about ten yards ahead of him.

"Keep your head down, Johnny. Don't stand so straight!"

"I'll be all right," Johnny panted. "You get on. I'm fine."

"Just keep that big head of yours low, that's all!"

They ran. Johnny sucked breath out and in. It felt like a fire-eater must feel when he takes a mouth of flame. The African air was burning like alcohol gas fumes. It seared your throat and your lungs.

They ran. Stumbling over lakes of pebbles and up sudden hillocks. They hadn't caught up with the contact fighting in full yet. Men were running everywhere, khaki ants scuttling over hot burned grass. Running everywhere. Johnny saw a couple of them fall down and stay down.

"Oh, they don't know how," was his comment to himself.

The stones, skittering underfoot, were just like that scatter of bright pebbles in the old dry creek at Fox River, Illinois. That sky was the Illinois sky, burned blue-black and shimmering. He thrust his wet body forward with big leaps. Green, high, broad, strangely verdant in the midst of this swelter, a hill came into his vision. Any minute now the "kids" would come yelling down side of that hill. . . .

Gun fire broke out from that hill like the rash of some flaming disease. Artillery cut loose, from behind the hill. Shells curved down in an arced wail. Where they struck they lifted the earth and gave it the bumps, the bumps, the bumps! Johnny laughed.

The thrill of it got inside Johnny Choir. His feet pounding, his ear-drums pressured by the gonging of his blood in his head, his long arms swinging easy, holding his automatic rifle—

A shell came down out of the hot sky, buried its nose thirty feet from Johnny Choir and blew outward with fire, rock, shrapnel, force.

Johnny leaped wide.

"Missed me! Missed me!"

He jumped forward, one foot pounding right after the other.

"Keep your head down, Johnny! Drop, Johnny!" Smith yelled.

Another shell. Another explosion. More shrapnel.

Only twenty-five feet away this time. Johnny felt the mighty force, wind, thrust and power of it. He shouted, "Missed again! I fooled ya! Missed again!" and ran on.

Thirty seconds later he realized he was alone. The other men had flopped on their faces to dig in, because the tanks that had protected them had to swerve and go around the hill. It was too steep for climbing with a tank. And without tank protection the men dug in. The shells were singing all around.

. . .

Johnny Choir was alone and he liked it. By Gosh, he'd capture that whole darned hill himself. If the others wanted to tag behind, then he'd have all the fun himself. Two hundred yards ahead of him a machine-gun was nested and chattering. Noise and fire came out like the stream from a powerful garden hose. It whipped and sprayed. Richochets filled the warm, shivering air of the slope.

Choir ran. He ran, laughing. Opening his big mouth, showing his teeth, he jerked to a stop, aimed, fired, laughed, and ran on again.

Machine-guns talked. A bullet line knitted the earth together in an idiot's crochet all around Johnny.

He danced and zigzagged and ran and danced and zigzagged again. Every few seconds he'd yell, "You missed me!" or "I ducked that one!" and then he'd pound like some special kind of new tank up the slope, swinging his gun.

He stopped. He aimed. He fired.

"Bang! I gotcha!" he cried.

A German fell down in the gun nest.

He ran again. Bullets swept down in a solid, withering wall. Johnny slipped through it, like an actor slipping through gray curtains, quiet, easy, calm.

"Missed me! Missed me, missed me! I ducked, I ducked!"

He was so far ahead of the others now that he could barely see them. Stumbling further, he fired three shots. "Gotcha! And you, and you! All three of you!"

Three Germans fell. Johnny cried out delightedly. Sweat glossed his cheeks, his blue eyes were bright, hot as the sky.

Bullets cascaded. Bullets flowed, slithered, ripped the stones over, around, about, under, behind him. He danced. He zigzagged. He laughed. He ducked.

The first German gun nest was silent. Johnny started for the second one. Way off somewhere he heard a hoarse voice shouting, "Come back, Johnny, you damn fool! Come back!" Eddie Smith's voice.

But there was so much noise he couldn't be sure.

He saw the expression on the faces of the four Germans who operated the machine-gun further up the hill. Their faces were pale under their desert tan, drawn tight and wild, their mouths open, their eyes wide.

They pointed their gun straight at him and cut loose.

"Missed me!"

An artillery shell from over the hill whistled down and landed thirty feet away.

Johnny catapulted himself. "Close! But not close enough!"

Two of the Germans broke, ran from the nest, yelling crazy words. The other two clung to the gun, white faced, pouring lead at Johnny.

Johnny shot them.

He let the other two go. He didn't want to shoot them in the back. He sat down and rested in the machine-gun nest and waited for the rest of his unit to catch up to him.

He watched the Americans pop up like jack-in-the-boxes all along the base of the hill and come running.

. . .

In about three minutes Eddie Smith came stumbling into the nest. His face was full of the same look that the Germans had had on their faces. He yelled at Johnny. He grabbed him and pawed him and looked him over.

"Johnny!" he cried. "Johnny, you're all right, you're not hit!"

Johnny thought that was a funny thing to say. "Heck no," replied Johnny, "I told you I'd be all right."

Smith's jaw dropped. "But I saw artillery shells drop near you, and that machine-gun fire—"

Johnny scowled. "Hey, Private Smith, look at your hand."

Ed's hand was red. Shrapnel, lodged in the wrist, had drawn a quick flow of blood.

"You should have ducked, Private Smith. Darn, I keep telling you, but you never believe me."

Eddie Smith gave him one of those looks. "You can't duck bullets, Johnny."

Johnny laughed. It was the sound of a kid laughing. The sound of a kid who knows very well the routine of war, and how it comes and goes. Johnny laughed.

"They didn't argue with me, Private Smith," he said, quietly. "None of them argued. That was funny. All the other kids used to argue about it."

"What other kids, Johnny?"

"Oh, you know. The other kids. At the creek, back home. We'd always argue as to who was shot and as to who was dead. But just now, when I said 'Bang, you're dead,' these guys played the game right along. Not one of them argued.

They didn't any of them say, 'Bang, I got you first. *You're* dead!' No. They let me be the winner all the time. In the old days they used to argue so much—"

"Did they?"

"Sure."

"What was it, now, that you said to them, Johnny? Did you actually say, 'BANG, you're dead'?"

"Sure."

"And they didn't argue?"

"No. Isn't that swell of them. Next time I think it's only fair I play dead."

"No," snapped Smith. He swallowed and wiped sweat off his face. "No, don't do that, Johnny. You—you just go on like you been going." He swallowed again. "Now, about this business of your ducking those bullets, about them missing you . . . "

"Sure they did. Sure I did."

. . .

Smith's hands trembled.

Johnny Choir looked at him. "What's wrong, Private?"

"Nothing. Just—just excitement. And, I was just wondering."

"What?"

"Just wondering how old you are, Johnny."

"Me? I'm ten, going on eleven." Johnny stopped and flushed guiltily. "No. What's wrong with me? I'm eighteen, going on nineteen."

Johnny looked at the bodies of the German soldiers.

"Tell them to get up now, Private Smith."

"Huh?"

"Tell them to get up. They can get up now if they want to."

"Yeah, well—you see, Johnny. That is. Uh. Look, Johnny, they'll get up after we leave. Yeah, that's it. After we leave. It's against the—rules—for them to get up now. They want to rest awhile. Yeah—rest."

"Oh."

"See here, Johnny. I wanna tell you something right now!"

"What?"

Smith licked his lips and moved his feet and swallowed and cursed softly. "Oh, nothing. Nothing at all. Damn. Except that I'm envious of you. I—I wish I hadn't grown up so hard and so fast. See Johnny, *you're* going to come out of this war. Don't ask me how, I just feel you are. That's the way the Book reads. Maybe *I* won't come out. Maybe I'm not a kid. And not being a kid maybe I won't have the protection that God gives a kid just because he is a kid. Maybe I grew up believing in the wrong things—believing in reality and things like death and bullets.

Maybe I'm nuts for imagining things about you. Sure I am. Just my imagination for thinking that you're—aw. Whatever happens, Johnny, remember this, I'm going to stick by you."

"Sure you are. That's the only way I'll play," said Johnny.

"And if anybody so much as tries to tell you you can't duck bullets, you know what I'm going to do?"

"What?"

"I'm going to kick them square in the teeth!"

Eddie got up, jerking, nervous, a funny smile on his lips.

"Now, come on, Johnny, let's move and move fast. There's another—game—playing over this hill."

Johnny got excited. "Is there?"

"Yeah," said Smith. "Come on."

They went over the hill together. Johnny Choir dancing and zigzagging and laughing, and Eddie Smith following close behind, watching him with a white face and wide, envious eyes. . . .

FOUR

THE SHAPE OF THINGS (TOMORROW'S CHILD)

The child was born in April. The surgeon-medicos and hypno-machine operators muttered and gasped and hurried from the delivery room with it, and no matter how Ellen pleaded with them they wouldn't show her the child.

Pete Horn was sitting in the waiting room when Dr. Wolcott, greatly worried and wild-eyed, hurried in.

"Mr. Horn?"

"Yeah?" Pete raised his homely broad red face with the sandy moustache on the broad upper lip.

"Come with me, will you?"

"Sure. Hey, what's wrong?"

"Your wife is fine. But the baby—"

"The baby! What about it? Is it dead?"

"No. In fact it's very much alive—well—uh—come along."

The doctor rushed him into the children's ward. Six surgeons were gathered about a table, staring down.

The baby was the center of their attention. Horn pushed his way through and looked down. He gulped and turned the color of curdled milk. "God. What is it?"

It was a blue pyramid. It had six blue snake-like appendages, and three eyes that blinked from the tips of projecting structures.

The pyramid sat flat on its base, not moving.

Horn didn't move either.

"It weighs seven pounds, eight ounces," someone said.

Horn held onto his head with thick fingers. "You're kidding me. That's not my baby. Oh God, you're kidding me!"

"We thought it best to show you first, Mr. Horn. We didn't dare show it to your wife. The shock, you know. She mustn't be told about it now."

"Get me away from here." Pete Horn turned his back and there was sweat, lots of it, cold in his palms. He shook all over.

"Not until we explain, Mr. Horn. This is your child. Understand that." This

Doctor Wolcott was bone-thin, timid, nervous—his eyes bulged continuously behind thick glasses. "This is your child."

"No. No, it's not!" shouted Horn. His mind wouldn't touch the thought of this—monstrosity. "It's a freak. It's awful. It's a nightmare. Destroy the thing."

"We can't destroy a human life."

"Human?" Horn blinked tears. "That's not human. It's a crime against God."

The doctor patted his shoulder. "Listen to what I have to say. We doctors have examined the—child—and we have decided that it is not a mutant. It is not a result of gene destruction or rearrangement. It is not a freak. It is not misshapen. It is not sick or a monster. Please try to understand that it is your baby."

Horn just stared at nothing, his blue eyes wide open. He swayed. The doctor went on talking.

"We've decided that the birth trauma somehow affected the baby. The conditions of the atmosphere, the atomic variations, had much to do with it; and a dimensional distructure, coupled with the fact that there were simultaneous short-circuitings of the new birth-mechs and the hypno-machines — well, anyway," he ended lamely, "when your baby was born it was born into another dimension."

"Huh?" Horn's mouth opened, showing strong white, uneven teeth. "I—I don't get it."

"Your baby is alive, well, happy. It is lying on the table. But because it was born into another dimension it has a shape alien to us. Our eyes, adjusted to a three dimensional concept, cannot recognize it as a baby. But it is. Underneath that camouflage, the strange pyramidal shape and tendril appendages, it is your child."

Horn thought it over. He closed his mouth and wiped his eyes and stopped shaking. Yeah. He was beginning to understand. It was his kid, no matter what. But what a lousy looking kid. What a horrible looking thing.

"What're we going to do?" he asked. "How'll I tell Ellen?"

"Mm—we'll have to work that out."

"I can't love it, Doctor Wolcott. I can love the idea of a kid, but this dimensional horror, no. What can I do?"

"Give it to us. We'll raise it for you."

Horn thought some more. "No. It's still my kid. It still belongs to me and Ellen. I'll raise it. I'll give it a home. Raise it like I'd raise any kid. Give it a normal home life. Try to learn to like it. Treat it gently. But what about Ellen?"

"If you *must* keep the child yourself, make an excuse to your wife. You're a naturalist. Tell her you've found a new specimen and are experimenting with it. Later, perhaps, we can tell her. I don't know—I'm no psychiatrist. But the important thing is this—it is a baby. It needs food, milk, love. I imagine you're correct in wanting to keep it yourself. Yes, I think you are. Just because the

birth trauma shocked it into another dimension is no reason why it should receive further abnormal treatment. We'll discuss the details more fully, later."

When the surgeons finished musing and whispering, Horn sidled reluctantly once more to the table and held out his hand.

"Hello—" he started to say. Then he jerked. "What sex is it?" he asked Wolcott.

Wolcott said he didn't know.

"Hello, *baby*," said Horn, quiet-like.

The blue pyramid sat there looking up at Horn with three bright pink-crystal eyes. It shifted a tiny blue tendril, touching Horn's hand with it. The tendril was cold.

Horn shivered.

"Hello, baby."

Doctor Wolcott produced a milk bottle with nipple attached.

"Probably hungry. Don't know how to feed it. This is woman's milk. We'll see— Here, baby."

. . .

Baby looked upward through clearing mists. Baby saw the shapes moving over him and knew them to be friendly. Baby was new-born, but there was something different about being born now. Baby was aware.

There were objects around Baby. Six cubes of a grey-white color. Six cubes with hexagonal appendages and eleven eyes. Then there were two other cubes coming from a distance over a crystalline plateau. One of the cubes was white like salt. It had eleven eyes, too. Shrill sounds came from the six grey-white cubes. It was like the piping of piccolos all playing at once.

Now the newly arrived cubes were whistling. After awhile the White Cube extended one of its hexagonal appendages to touch baby. Baby responded by putting out one of its tendrils from its pyramidal body. Baby liked the White Cube. Baby liked. Baby was hungry now. Baby liked. Maybe the White Cube would give it food. . . .

The grey cube produced a pink globule for Baby. Baby was now to be fed. Good. Good. Baby accepted food eagerly.

Food was good. All the grey-white cubes drifted away, leaving the White Cube standing over Baby looking down and whistling over and over. Over and over.

. . .

Pete Horn took his wife home from the hospital in a 'copter. They glided into the parkway where it was warmly green and nice. Wolcott had accompanied them, to help. As they climbed from the 'copter he said, rather timidly, "Just don't think about your baby, Mrs. Horn. You can always have another later. You must expect deaths even in 1987. Come to me at any time for help."

Ellen was dry-eyed. Her face was pale. It had been two weeks since the birth.

But she was bearing up well. They had given her maternity-hypnosis for several days, preparing her for the moment when they told her of the death of her first born.

"I'd like to have another child right away," said Ellen. "May I?"

Wolcott was a bit hasty with, "Well, now, not immediately. Really, for your own sake, you should wait—ah—at least three years."

"That seems so long."

"Not long at all when it is over. Three years it is, Mrs. Horn. Now, I'm afraid I'll have to fly back to the Clinic. See you from time to time, Mr. Horn."

"Thanks, Doc. Bye."

So life trembled and settled down again in the Horn residence of Glendale. Ellen eventually returned to her semantics-institute work at Glen-Anglo-Lang, and Horn himself continued his flying jaunts to various parts of the earth via rocket-plane and back in less than a day with new specimens.

It was several weeks before he journeyed to the Clinic again to see Wolcott. And then, reluctantly.

Wolcott was glad to see him. "Hello, Horn. Your baby is doing well."

"Good. How soon—how soon do you think I can bring IT home, Doc?"

"Not so soon that your wife would suspect. I think we'd better wait until she's settled herself calmly. Say—next January."

"That long?"

"Yes. And, naturally, that'll give us time to try and figure it out for you. You should be willing to help science, Mr. Horn, in a case like this. First extra-dimensional child ever born. It'd be good of you to let us survey the find a few months before you take it home. Just the next few months, and then, of course, for all concerned, it would be best if you handled it in its formative years. With our intermittent advice and help, of course. We'll keep a fatherly eye on its progress. After all, the first five years of a baby's life are the most important. It needs fatherly care. Motherly care."

"Sure," said Horn. "I can get Ellen to take an interest in it, without her realizing it's her own kid. Good, huh? Make it a pet. Yes, that's it. A pet. Like a dog or cat or rabbit."

"Good enough, Horn."

"What I'm worrying about is how will the baby *look* when he grows up?"

"Much the same as now."

Horn paled. "Oh, I don't know. I don't know. Why do we bother? Why don't we just kill the thing. Kill it and forget it."

Wolcott talked gently. "We don't dare. Others may be born like it in the future. If they are, we've GOT to know what causes it. What strains and ruptures in atomic structure and dimensional matrixes are responsible. We must watch your child grow, learn, change. We must find a way, if possible, to change it back into the normal baby it should be."

Horn stiffened. He closed his big fists. "Then—then there is a chance that—someday—it will be normal again?"

Wolcott nodded. "A good chance. *If* you cooperate. I don't wish to promise impossibilities, but we scientists have never been stumped for answers yet. We'll find a solution, Horn."

Horn relaxed. He smiled a little. "Okay, then. I'll play along. I'll do anything as long as I got something to look forward to. And that thing to look forward to is—my baby. My real baby. The one I want bad for Ellen and me. I'll play along as long as you say."

"It may be five years, understand. Or ten. But in the end, we'll know, and your service to humanity will not be forgotten."

They walked into another room to see the pyramid sitting in a special crib.

"Tell you what I'll do," said Horn. "I'm no psychologist. I'm a naturalist and only fair at the game, but I read somewhere about how you get used to things. This is how it'll be. I'll come to the Clinic once a week from now till next January, take the baby riding in my 'copter, get him used to having me around. It's supposed to be good psychologically for me and the kid, both. Get used to seeing his funny shape and color, and he'll get used to seeing me. Then, as months go by, increase my visits. Come twice a week, three times. By next January I'll be visiting every day and then one day I'll take him home with me to live."

Wolcott approved of the idea. Though he looked irritated at Horn for telling him his own business.

"One last question—"

"Fire away," said Wolcott.

"How do *we* look to the baby? It looks funny to us, but how do we look?"

"It's hard to tell. It's in another dimension. Therefore we probably look different than we are."

"You mean we don't look like men and women?"

"If we could see ourselves—no. But, understand, the baby knows nothing of men and women. To the baby whatever shape we are in, we are natural. It is accustomed to seeing us shaped as we are. It probably sees us as cubes or squares or circles. To the baby it is natural; having had no previous experience, no other norm with which to compare what it sees, it accepts us for what we are. We ARE its norm. On the other hand the baby is weird to us because we compare it to our accustomed shapes, sizes and colors. See?"

"Yeah. Yeah, sure."

"You can have the baby for half an hour, Horn. Take him in your 'copter around Griffith Park and bring him straight back, eh?"

"Uh. . .okay."

Horn stooped to pick up Baby.

. . .

The Baby was conscious of movement. The White Cube sat next to Baby, holding onto a long oblong of purple and steering it. The both of them were seated inside an ochre-colored bubble that floated swiftly over a vast bright plain of pyramids, hexagons, oblongs, pillars, bubbles, squares and multi-colored cubes.

The White Cube made a whistling noise. It was saying something to Baby. Baby wasn't old enough to understand. Baby just focussed its three bright pink-crystal eyes and looked at the White Cube, and then at the fleeing world outside the traveling bubble.

Baby felt—sleepy. Baby closed its eyes, settled its pyramidal youngness on the—seat—of the bubble. . .

Horn took the 'copter out over the smooth rolling greens of Griffith, and then turned its fluttering orbit back toward Glendale. From time to time he looked down at the pyramid on the seat next to him.

"Hello, Py."

He was getting over the shakes now. He could look the dimensional child right in the eyes without quaking. In fact the child was actually becoming interesting looking. He felt the unfettered curiosity of the naturalist bubbling up within himself. He actually smiled and laughed at the baby and asked it how it felt.

Before the trip was over the tiny blue pyramid had closed its eyes and gone to sleep. It only woke when the 'copter landed back at the Clinic. It woke and started making a noise like seven-toned bells. Horn emerged, hurriedly, and took the child inside. He handed it to Wolcott. "It must be crying."

Wolcott listened. "Yes. That's the noise it makes when it's hungry. It's crying, alright. Here, baby." He pacified the pyramid with a bottle. "Thanks for tending the child, Horn. See you next week?"

"Next week," said Horn, and went home again.

The days melted into weeks, the weeks into months, the months finally totalled a year. Every week, as regular as atomic time, Horn visited the Clinic, picked up his baby, and took it flying.

The baby grew, as all babies grow. "Nice progress," was Wolcott's comment. "Weighs sixteen pounds. Healthy looking, too."

"Healthy *looking*?" Horn looked puzzled.

"When his color is constant, bright—it's a healthy sign. When the color fades, dull—the child is unhealthy. Simple."

Horn looked forward, eventually, to taking his trips weekly with the youngster. By the year's end he came every day. Already he and the baby were trying to establish a means of communication between themselves. It was a success. The baby already was able to say Tree, Man, Dog, What?, Daddy, when the great day came for Horn to take it home for good.

Horn timed it right after a jaunt to South America. He walked into the large white rumpus room of his Glendale home with a portable table rolling ahead of him. On the table sat the pyramid. It was wide awake, making little contented whistling noises.

Ellen looked up from checking some research on a visi-screen. She smiled when she saw Horn and then scowled at the table.

"Well. What's *that* thing?"

"A rare Pyramidaceious Hornus."

"Daddy," said the blue pyramid in a bell-like voice.

Ellen arose from her desk and came over with the smooth pendulum movements that were undeniably hers and only hers. She was curious, as most naturalists' wives are, to get a better look.

"Oh, Pete—it's not dangerous is it?"

"Dangerous? Hostile? Fooie. It's as harmless as your Aunt Hattie. Cute, isn't it?"

"Ye-ess."

"You'll get to like Py. That's what I call him—Py."

The three pink-crystal eyes of Py flicked up at them both. The blue tendrils stirred.

"Daddy!"

"Yes, Py. Yes, little fella."

Ellen laughed easily. "Isn't that wonderful? It speaks! Good Lord, Pete Horn, where did you find it?"

"Where did I—oh, in the jungles. Deep back. Only one in existence. I'm lucky. Been teaching it words."

"So I notice—DADDY. What branch of the animal family is it from?"

"Mammal."

"Really?" Ellen touched the little snake-like appendages. "Looks more like a lower type. Crabs. Spiders. Invertebrates. Yet it looks in some strange way like a—monkey. Something about it— Are you going to sell it?"

"Oh, no. Going to keep it, watch it grow, prepare a monograph on it for the Medical Naturalists Society. You won't mind, will you, Ellen, my having it here, I mean?"

"Course not, darling. But I'd hate to think what that pry-face Mrs. Trent, next door, would say if she saw it. Anything you say, Pete. As long as you're sure it's not poisonous or hostile."

"It's not. I'm positive."

The pyramid looked straight at Ellen.

"Mama!" it declared.

Ellen raised dark brows. "Why, that's wonderful."

. . .

The Baby was conscious again of movement. The plain moved past it in three directions at once. The White Cube who called himself 'Ouoh' steered the bubble. Baby liked Ouoh.

The bubble ceased motion. White Cube moved from it with Baby.

They drifted into a black tesseract. A Pink Cube, seated behind a grey mound, glanced up and greeted them and then came to look at Baby.

Baby cried out, "Ouoh!"

Five minutes later, looking at the nice new Pink Cube, the baby opened its pyramidal mouth and declared, "Uuoh!"

And the Pink Cube retorted, "Tt. Uo. Wss."

Ellen and Pete Horn took a great deal of time tending to Py. The first five years of Py's upbringing were strange, humorous, different, but invariably interesting. There was the usual pharaphernalia of diapers, bottles, first words and reprimands.

"Why he eats just like a baby," said Ellen, at first.

Horn replied, nervously. "Yeah. Yeah, *doesn't* he?"

Ellen got to liking Py very much. She said so. Horn told Wolcott about this. Walcott beamed.

"All the better. When the time comes to tell her about the child, it will help. I've been experimenting, Horn; that is, when I've had time. The latest developments in the new Martian fever imported from Mars on the first rocket trips, have kept me damn busy. Haven't had time to worry about anything else. I may have news for you in about six months. An experiment. Something to do with birth trauma. Very complicated."

In the meanwhile, Ellen poured her affection, all of it that she would have originally poured upon her "dead" baby, upon Py; this creature labeled Py. That was good.

Horn experimented on his own. He carted home large plates of specially treated glass, infra-red, ultra-violet treated transparencies. Gazing at the pyramid through special magnifiers, he got through to nothing that looked like a baby. The barrier was unbreakable. It was silly to try. He gave up. The pyramid was a pyramid and nothing would change it except bringing it into the dimensional concept of Earth here and now.

Arriving home from a quick trip to Frisco one Sunday morning, Horn was startled and frightened to hear screams. Screams echoing over and over again, loud, terrified, from his residence.

A woman's voice. Screaming and running away from something.

"Monster! Monster!" the voice cried.

Horn recognized the voice. He landed his 'copter quickly, leaped out, and vaulted furiously into the house, in time to collide with a horror-eyed Mrs. Trent, the pry-face snooper from the next house-sector. She was the first out-

sider to get a look at the pyramid. When it had moved and cried out to her, she screamed and fled.

Both Horn and Ellen tried to calm her. The woman pulled loose, escaped. They could hear her screaming all down the block.

"Monster! Tried to kill me! Monster!"

Ellen stared after her, dismayed.

"Oh, now, Pete, she'll spoil everything. After all your work. Py wasn't hurting anything. Just sitting in the middle of the floor, like always. Half a decade of work and now SHE has to call the police."

Horn was angry. "I told you to lock the doors and keep them locked when Py was out of his nursery!"

"I'm sorry, dear. Do you think the police will make you give Py up?"

"I don't know. I don't know."

The front door burst open. A white-uniformed Street Charge officer stepped in, the hysterical woman behind him. The officer had an ugly-snouted blaster in one fist. He gasped and pointed it.

"Hold it!" shouted Horn. He leaped in front of Py, shielding him. "Don't shoot!"

"Now, look. . . " said the officer, tightly, eyes narrowed.

Horn looked wildly at Ellen, at the officer, and then he closed his eyes. "Call Doctor Wolcott. Glendale Clinic. He'll explain. This creature's harmless."

The officer put his gun down several inches. "I'll call. I'll also report to H.Q. We'll investigate thoroughly. What in God's name is that monster?"

Wolcott responded instantly.

Half an hour later Wolcott was at Horn's residence with another staff-member. He arrived immediately following a police 'copter. A captain of police and several attachés had come to gaze wonderingly and nervously at the thing sitting in the center of the living room.

Wolcott took over. "I'll assume responsibility, officers. In cases of this sort I've got the say-so, you understand."

"Yes, sir. But—"

"No buts. A satisfactory report will be given you, Captain Shirmer."

Shirmer swore. "Report, hell. I'm sticking around until I see with my own eyes and ears. That thing ain't—earthly."

Wolcott nodded darkly. "No, it's not." He turned to Horn. "I guess this is it, Horn. I'll have to let the cat out."

Horn nodded numbly. "What about Ellen?"

Ellen cried. "Well, what about me?"

"I want to talk to you—alone. You and Mr. Horn." Wolcott nodded at the police. "Please leave us alone until I'm finished. I'll explain later. Please. Go."

The police withdrew, mumbling.

Wolcott said, "Hold her hand, Horn. Ellen, this is what I have to tell you—"

"Mama!" cried the pyramid on the floor.

. . .

When it was all over, and they were on the way to the Clinic with Py sitting in the back seat on Wolcott's lap, Ellen, looking pale and uncommonly relaxed, said:

"I knew it. I knew it all the time, way back in my mind. I felt it, somehow. I fell in love with Py too easily. I thought it was funny, at first. People don't like little horrors like Py so quickly, so easily. I did. I grew to accept him and baby him. I taught him words. Oh, it's so strange. Oh, it's so strange. Oh, it's so strange."

Pete Horn held her tightly. "Rest, darling. Don't think. What now, Doctor?"

The 'copter landed at the Clinic. Behind it, the police 'copter dropped. "The police won't believe my theory about the other dimension. I've got to prove it or they won't let you keep the pyramid."

"Not keep Py! Not keep my own off-spring!?"

"They're afraid of it. They're not sure. They think Py might be a mutant horror, capable of spawning other horrors. You can't really blame them."

The police gave them escort into the Clinic.

"So now—to prove my theory."

Wolcott took them to a small clean white room in the center of which stood a leather, metal, velvet apparatus. It was large and simply constructed. Wolcott made adjustments on it.

"I intend reproducing the exact conditions of the mother's body and the child within that body. I intend reproducing the exact details of the birth of that child; using hypno-mechs, birth-mechs and attempting to re-establish the birth trauma, dimensional warp of some very complicated detail, short-circuiting of the mechs, and all of the forces and variables present at that time a few years ago that caused the child to be born as he is. I intend putting the baby under those exact pressures again, under another trauma of atomic, electric, physical, mental and dimensional strain; and with that trauma reintegrate the normal child from the fifth dimension into our own. I don't know if Py was formed in the fifth dimension or BORN into it. I can only try to rebirth him out of it into our normal world."

The police blinked, scratched their heads and kept a respectful silence.

Ellen began crying, suddenly. She put her dark hair against Horn's shoulder and sobbed. "Will he be a real baby then?"

"Yes, yes, Ellen. We hope so, don't we, Doc?"

"We can only hope. Nothing's certain. We may fail utterly, in which case the police—will have to take over."

Wolcott quietly took Py, placed him within the apparatus and closed it down. Nourishment tubes were attached. Several switches and studs and dials were adjusted. Nobody said anything.

Ellen stopped crying and just stared at the apparatus.

Horn swore under his breath. "How long do we have to wait?"

"Four days. At least four days."

One day. Two days.

Three days. Four days.

. . .

On the fifth day, the apparatus was still there, the room was still clean, the way it had been, and the same wondering silent crowd was gathered. Wolcott, Ellen, Horn, the police, the medical staff. There was a lot of silence and cigarette smoking and staring eyes and waiting through the long last few minutes.

Horn swallowed the tight warm knot in his throat. It had to work. It had to, for Ellen's sake. A baby meant so much to her, and it meant so much to him. He believed in the doctor and prayed that there'd soon be a well-formed, natural child here for Ellen's empty arms. He'd be so damn happy then. Everything would be swell.

But what if they had neglected some single point? If they had overlooked some certain evident fact? If something went wrong—What if—in the stress of the experiment they failed to make an accounting of all factors?

Horn shifted uneasily———

Wolcott flicked a switch. The room lights dimmed low. They were just a lot of silhouettes standing in the dark now.

"Oh, Pete, Pete."

"Hold on, Ellen. It won't be long."

"What if it fails, Pete? What?"

"It can't fail. It's impossible, it's not like anything ever in the world before, but it can't fail. Hush."

There was a low humming. A glitter of hidden, shifting power. The very atoms of the room divided against each other; into alien and enemy camps. Two sides fighting for supremacy. Horn felt his own insides become pyramidal, hexagonal with the pull of tremendous magnetic wrestlings. Feeling that pulling, sucking, demanding power, he believed. He knew that the Doc was right. Damn, damn right. Damn right.

That power yearned and nuzzled and sucked and clawed. The room's dimensions were stretched out in all wild lines of misunderstanding. Sweat, pouring down the gathered faces, was more than sweat now; it seemed a dimensional essence.

At any instant Horn thought he would find himself a pyramid! Dimensions

meant nothing. It was just what you were used to seeing. That was it. Just the normal way you took things, accepted things. Strange universe. Anything could happen.

Somebody cursed out loud. The power in the room roared higher, and Wolcott moved silently, sweating, in the dark.

The apparatus was shifting quietly now, and Ellen was frozen to Pete Horn's body like a terrified leech. The power went up, up, up!

There was a clicking, sliding noise. A clicking, sliding noise. Clicking, sliding.

The power was cut.

A deep breathing silence followed.

Wolcott said, hoarsely. "Turn on the lights."

The lights came on.

"Pete. Oh, Pete, look!"

"Look!"

"Well, I'll be, I'll be, I'll be—" someone said, far away.

Everybody looked.

Lying outside the apparatus, the silent apparatus, was the son of Ellen and Peter Horn.

A living, pink-faced, blue-eyed boy, five years old. He was lying on his back, gasping and blinking.

"Peter!" sobbed Ellen. "Pete."

"Doctor. Thank God—" Horn sighed relievedly.

The pink-faced, blue-eyed boy looked around and brought his eyes to focus. He stared at Ellen, then at Horn, then at the police, and then at Wolcott. His eyes widened. His mouth opened and the most incredible scream exploded from the child.

Wolcott moved swiftly toward the child, his face illuminated with sudden realization. The boy screamed and screamed. . .

. . .

It was dark and nice here. Warm, dim, quiet, nice. The Baby lay quietly, his pyramidal shape waiting. Waiting. His little blue tendrils twitched drowsily. Warm and dark and nice. No light. No sound. Gentle pressure. No nothing but just darkness and soundlessness, and—

Wait. Now. Yes. Movement. Gentle, easy pressuring, moving through the soft blackness. Easy, soft, slow, quiet. The pyramid didn't mind it at all. Movement was alright.

Different, though. Different and—alien. The pyramidal shape was webbed into a dimensional matrix, wrenched, flung, jabbed, caught and heated so it melted like quick running wax, instantly. Caught—

A clicking sliding noise. Clicking. Sliding.

All over. It was all over.

Bright light shone on him.

Py blinked, looking around. Ten seconds later he realized his new body, refocused his two new eyes.

And then he saw.

He saw the humans. The tall people with heads and arms and two legs, dressed in clothes, and talking English. Their colors. Their shapes.

Py stared.

Where was the Pink Cube that he loved? Gone? Where was the nice White Cube that had also loved him? Gone. Where was his own pyramidal body? Gone! It smote him, hard. Where was the wonderful world of hexagons and octagonal and oblong bodies? Gone. The world of tesseracts and bubbles and squares and brilliant hues? Gone. What was all this, this, THIS! Gone! GONE!

There was only one thing left for the child to do.

It could only go insane.

It did.

FIVE

THE NIGHT

You are a child in a small town. You are, to be exact, eight years old, and it is growing late at night. Late, for you, accustomed to bedding in at nine or nine-thirty; once in awhile perhaps begging Mom or Dad to let you stay up later to hear Sam and Henry on that strange radio that was popular in this year of 1927. But most of the time you are in bed and snug at this time of night.

It is a warm summer evening. You live in a small house on a small street in the outer part of town where there are few street lights. There is only one store open, about a block away. Mrs. Singer's. In the hot evening Mother has been ironing the Monday washing and you have been intermittently begging for ice-cream.

Your Mother and yourself are all alone at home in the warm darkness of summer. Finally, just before it is time for Mrs. Singer to close her store, Mother relents and tells you to

"Run and get a pint of ice-cream and be sure she packs it tight."

You ask if you can get a scoop of chocolate ice-cream put on top, because you don't like vanilla, and Mother agrees. You clutch the money and run barefooted over the warm evening cement sidewalk, under the apple trees and oak trees toward the store. The city is so quiet and far off, you can hear the crickets sounding in the spaces beyond the hot indigo trees that hold back the stars.

Your bare feet slap on the pavement, you cross the street and, a lonely little boy, find Mrs. Singer moving ponderously about her business, singing Yiddish melodies.

"Pint ice-cream. Chocolate on top. Yes," she says.

You watch her fumble the metal top off the ice-cream freezer and manipulate the scoop, packing the cardboard pint chock full with "chocolate on top, yes." You give the money, receive the chill, icy pack, and rubbing it across your brow and cheek, laughing, you thump barefootedly homeward. Behind you, the lights of the lonely little store blink out and there is only a street light shimmering on the corner, and the whole city seems to be going to sleep. . . .

Opening the screen door, you find Mother still ironing. She looks hot and irritated, but she smiles just the same.

"When will father be back from lodge-meeting," you ask.

"About eleven-thirty or twelve," Mother replies. She takes the ice-cream to the kitchen and divides it. She gives you your special portion of chocolate, dishes out some for herself and puts the rest of it away, "We'll save some for Skipper and your father."

Skipper is your brother. He is your older brother. Twelve years old he is, and healthy, red-faced, hawk-nosed and tawny-haired. Broad-shouldered for his years and always running. He is allowed to stay up later than you. Not much later, but enough to make him feel it is worth while being born first. He is over on the other side of town this evening to a game of kick-the-can and will be home soon. He and the older kids have been yelling and kicking and running all evening, having fun. Soon he will come clomping in, smelling of sweat and green grass on his knees where he fell, and smelling very much in all ways like Skipper; which is natural.

You sit and enjoy the ice-cream. You are at the core of the deep dark summer night. Your Mother and yourself and the night all around this little house on this little street. You lick each spoon of ice-cream thoroughly before digging for another, and Mother puts her ironing board away and the hot iron in its case, and she sits in the armchair by the phonograph, eating her dessert and saying, "My lands, it was a hot day today. It's still hot. Earth soaks up all the heat and lets it out at night. It'll be soggy sleeping tonight."

You both sit there listening to the summer silence. The darkness is pressed down by every window and door, with the stars holding up the rest of the universe. There is no sound. The radio needs a new battery, and you have played all the Knickerbocker Quartet records and Al Jolson and the Two Black Crows records to exhaustion; so you just sit on the hardwood floor by the door and look out into the dark dark dark, pressing your nose against the screen until the flesh of its tip is moulded into small dark squares.

"I wonder where your brother is?" Mother says after a while. Her spoon scrapes on the dish. "He should be home by now. It's almost nine-thirty."

"He'll be here," you say, knowing very well that he will be.

. . .

You follow Mom out to wash the dishes and put them in the cupboard. Each sound, each rattle of spoon or dish, is amplified in the baked evening. Silently, you go to the living room again, take the cushions off the couch and, together, yank it open and extend it down into the double bed that it secretly is. Mother makes the bed, punching the pillows neatly to flump them up for your head and then, as you are unbuttoning your shirt, she says:

"Wait a while, Doug."

"Why?"

"Because. I say so."

"You look funny, Mom."

Mom sits down a moment and then gets up and goes to the door and calls. You listen to her calling and calling Skipper, Skipper, Skiiiiiiiperrrrrrrr over and over. Her calling goes out into the summer warm dark and never comes back. The echoes pay no attention.

Skipper. Skipper. Skipper.

Skipper!

And as you sit on the floor a coldness that is not ice-cream and not winter, and not part of the heat of summer, goes through you. You notice the way Mother's eyes slide and blink and the way she stands undecided and is kind of nervous. All of these things.

Mother opens the screen door. She steps out into the night and walks off the porch, down the steps, and down the walk about fifty feet. You listen to her feet moving.

She calls again. Silence.

She calls twice more. You sit in the room, listening. Any moment now Skipper will reply, from down the long, long narrow street:

"All right, Mom! All right, Mother! Coming!"

But he doesn't answer. And for two minutes you sit there looking at the made-up bed, the silent radio, the silent phonograph, at the chandelier with the crystal bobbins on it, at the rug with the scarlet and blue curlicues on it. You stub your toe on the edge of the bed purposely to see how much it hurts. Quite a bit.

Whining, the screen door opens, and Mother says:

"Come on, Shorts. We'll take a walk."

"Where to?"

"Just down the block. Come on. Better put your shoes on, though. You'll catch cold."

"No, I won't. I'll be all right."

You take her hand and together you walk down St. James Street. You smell lilacs in blossom; fallen apples lying crushed and odorous in the deep grass. Underfoot, the concrete is still warm; and the crickets are sounding louder against the darkening dark. You reach a corner, turn, and walk toward the ravine.

. . .

Off somewhere, a car goes by, flashing its lights in the distance. There is such a complete lack of life, light and activity. Here and there, back off from where you are walking toward the ravine, you see faint squares of light where people are still up. But most of the houses, darkened, are sleeping already, and there are a few lightless places where the occupants of a dwelling sit talking low dark talk on their front porches. You hear a porch swing squeaking as you walk past.

"I wish your father was home," says Mother. Her large hand tightens around your small one. "Just wait'll I get that boy. I'll spank him within an inch of his life."

There is a razor strop in the kitchen for this. You think about it, remembering when Dad has doubled it, flourished it with muscled control over and across your leaping flanks. You doubt whether Mother will carry out her promise.

Now you have walked another block and are standing by the holy black silhouette of the German Baptist Church at the corner of Chapel Street and Glen Rock. In back of the church a hundred yards, the ravine begins. You can smell it. It has a dank sewer, rotten foliage, dark green odor. It is a wide ravine that cuts and twists across the town, a jungle by day; a place to let alone at night, Mother has often declared.

You should feel encouraged by the nearness of the German Baptist Church, but you are not—because the building is not illumined, is cold and useless as a skeleton hulk brooding on the ravine's lip.

You are only eight years old and you know little of death and fear and dread. Death is the waxen effigy in the coffin when you were six and your Grandfather passed away; looking like a great fallen vulture in his coffin, silent withdrawn, no more to tell you how to be a good boy, no more to comment succinctly upon politics. Death is your little sister one morning when you awaken at the age of seven, look into her crib and see her staring up at you with a blind blue, fixed and frozen stare until the men came with a small wicker basket to take her away. Death is when you stand by her high-chair four weeks later and suddenly realize she will never be in it again, laughing or crying and making you jealous of her because she was born. That is death.

But this is more than death. This summer night wading deep in time and stars and warm eternity. It is an essence of all the things you will ever feel or see or hear in your life again, being brought steadily home to you all at once.

Leaving the sidewalk, you walk along a trodden, pebbled, weed-fringed path to the ravine's edge. Crickets, in loud full drumming chorus now, are shouting to quiver the dead. You follow obediently behind brave, fine, tall Mother who is defender of all the universe. You feel braveness because she goes before, and you hang back a trifle for a moment, and then hurry on, too. Together, then, you approach, reach and pause at the very edge of civilization.

The ravine.

Here and now, down there in that pit of jungled blackness is suddenly all the evil you will ever know. Evil you will never understand. All of the nameless things are there. Later, when you have grown you will be given names to label them with. Ghosts, leprechauns, trolls, goblins, spirits; pitiful epithets, meaningless syllables to describe the waiting gloom. Down there in the huddled shadows,

among the thick tree trunks and trailing vines, lives the odor of decay. Here, at this place, civilization ends, reason ends, and a universal evil takes over.

You realize you are alone. Yourself and your Mother. Her hand trembles. Her hand *trembles.*

. . .

Your belief in your private world is shattered. You feel your Mother tremble. Why does she do that? Is she, too, doubtful? But is she not bigger, stronger, more intelligent than yourself? Does she, too, feel that intangible menace, that groping out of darkness, that crouching malignancy down below? Is there, then, no strength in growing up, no solace in being an adult, no sanctuary any place in life, no flesh citadel strong enough to withstand the scrabbling assault of midnights? Doubts flush your mind. Ice cream lives again in your throat, stomach, spine and limbs; you are instantly cold as a wind out of December-gone.

You realize that all men are like this. That each man is to himself one alone. One oneness, a unit in a society, but always afraid. Like here, standing. If you should scream now, if you should holler for help, would it matter?

You are so close to the ravine now that in the instant of your scream, in the interval between someone hearing it and running to rescue you, much could happen.

Blackness could come swiftly, swallowing; and in one titanically freezing moment all would be concluded. Long before dawn, long before police with flashlights might probe the disturbed pathway, long before men with trembling brains could rustle down the pebbles to your help. Even if they were within five hundred yards of you now, and help certainly is, in three seconds a dark tide could rise to take all eight years of life away from you and Death would meet you in the full.

The essential impact of life's loneliness crushes your small, beginning to tremble body. Mother is alone, too. She cannot look to the sanctity of marriage, the protection of her family's love, she cannot look to the Constitution of the United States, or the City Police, she cannot look anywhere, in this very instant, but into her heart, and there she will find nothing but uncontrollable repugnance and a will to fear. In this instant it is an individual problem seeking an individual solution. You must accept being alone and work on from there.

You swallow hard and cling to your Mother. Oh, Lord, don't let her die, you think. Don't do anything to us. Father will be coming home from lodge-meeting in an hour and if the house is empty . . .?

Mother advances down the path into the primeval jungle a few paces. Your voice is all made of trembles. "Mother. Skip's all right. Skip's all right. He's all right. Skip's all right."

Mother's voice is strained, quiet. "He always comes through here. I tell him not to, but those darned kids, they come through here anyway. Some night he'll come through and never come out again—"

Never come out again. That could mean anything. Tramps. Criminals. Darkness. Accidents. Most of all—Death.

Alone in the universe.

• • •

There are a million small towns like this all over the world. Each as dark, as lonely, as removed, as full of shuddering and wonder. The reedy playing of minor-key violins is the small town's music, with no lights but many shadows. Oh the vast swelling loneliness of them. The secret damp ravines of them. Life is a horror living in them at night, when at all sides sanity, marriage, children, happiness, is threatened by an ogre called Death.

Mother raises her voice into the night.

"Skip! Skipper!" she calls, "Skip! Skipper!"

Suddenly, both of you realize there is something wrong. Something very wrong. You listen intently and realize what it is.

The crickets have stopped chirping.

Silence is complete.

Never in your life a silence like this one. One so utterly complete. Why should the crickets cease? Why? What reason? They have never stopped ever before. Not ever.

Unless. Unless—

Something is going to happen. It is as if the whole ravine is tensing, bunching its black muscles, drawing in its power from all around the sleeping countryside for miles and miles. From damp dells, from rolling hills where dogs howl to moons, from all around the great silence is sucked into one tight ball, and you at the center of it. In ten seconds now, something will happen. Something will happen. The crickets are still silent, and the stars so close they almost brush your head a cosmic blow. Swarms of them. The night is still hot.

Growing, growing, the silence. Growing, growing, the tenseness. Oh, it is so dark, so far away from everything. Oh, oh, God.

And then, way, way off in the silence:

"Okay, Mom. Coming, Mother!"

And again:

"Hi, Mom! Coming, Mom!"

And then the quick scuttering of feet running down through the stomach of the ravine as three kids come running, laughing. Your brother, Skipper, and Chuck Redman and Augie Bartz. Running, laughing.

The stars suck back up in the sky like the stung antennae of ten million snails.

The crickets chirp again.

The darkness pulls back, startled, shocked, angry. Pulls back, losing its appetite at being so rudely interrupted as it prepared to feed. The darkness yanks back its odorous wet skirt and the three kids pile out of it, laughing.

"Hi, Mom! Hi, Shorts!"

It smells like Skipper, all right. Sweat and grass and his oiled leather baseball glove.

"Young man, you're going to get a licking," declares Mother. She puts away her fear instantly. You know she will never tell anybody of it, ever. It will be in her heart though, for all time, as it is in your heart, for all time.

You walk home to bed in the late summer night. You are glad Skipper is alive. Very glad. For a moment there you thought—

Far off in the dim moonlit country, over a viaduct and down a valley, a train goes running along and it whistles like a lost metal nameless thing. You go to bed, shivering, beside your brother, listening to that train whistle, and thinking of a cousin who lived way out in the country where that train is now; a cousin who died of pneumonia late at night years ago. . . .

You hear footsteps outside the house on the sidewalk, as Mother is turning out the lights. A man clears his throat in a way you recognize.

Mother says, "That's your father."

It is.

SIX

PERCHANCE TO DREAM (ASLEEP IN ARMAGEDDON)

You don't want death and you don't expect death. Something goes wrong, your rocket tilts in space, a planetoid jumps up, blackness, movement, hands over the eyes, a violent pulling back of available power in the fore-jets, the crash . . .

The darkness. In the darkness, the senseless pain. In the pain, the nightmare.

He was not unconscious.

Your name? asked hidden voices. *Sale,* he replied in whirling nausea. *Leonard Sale. Occupation,* cried the voices. *Spaceman!* he cried, alone in the night. *Welcome,* said the voices. *Welcome, welcome.* They faded.

He stood up in the wreckage of his ship. It lay like a folded, tattered garment around him.

The sun rose and it was morning.

Sale pried himself out the small airlock and stood breathing the atmosphere. Luck. Sheer luck. The air was breathable. An instant's checking showed him that he had two months' supply of food with him. Fine, fine! And this—he fingered at the wreckage. Miracle of miracles! The radio was intact.

He stuttered out the message on the sending key. CRASHED ON PLANETOID 787. SALE. SEND HELP. SALE. SEND HELP.

The reply came instantly: HELLO, SALE. THIS IS ADDAMS IN MARSPORT. SENDING RESCUE SHIP LOGARITHM. WILL ARRIVE PLANETOID 787 IN SIX DAYS. HANG ON.

Sale did a little dance.

It was simple as that. One crashed. One had food. One radioed for help. Help came. *La!* He clapped his hands.

The sun rose and was warm. He felt no sense of mortality. Six days would be no time at all. He would eat, he would read, he would sleep. He glanced at his surroundings. No dangerous animals; a tolerable oxygen supply. What more could one ask? Beans and bacon, was the answer. The happy smell of breakfast filled the air.

After breakfast he smoked a cigarette slowly, deeply, blowing out. He nodded contentedly. What a life! Not a scratch on him. Luck. Sheer luck.

His head nodded. Sleep, he thought.

Good idea. Forty winks. Plenty of time to sleep, take it easy. Six whole long, luxurious days of idling and philosophizing. Sleep.

He stretched himself out, tucked his arm under his head, and shut his eyes.

• • •

Insanity came in to take him. The voices whispered.

Sleep, yes, sleep, said the voices. *Ah, sleep, sleep.*

He opened his eyes. The voices stopped. Everything was normal. He shrugged. He shut his eyes casually, fitfully. He settled his long body.

Eeeeeeeeeee, sang the voices, far away.

Ahhhhhhhh, sang the voices.

Sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sang the voices.

Die, die, die, die, die, sang the voices.

Ooooooooooooo, cried the voices.

Mmmmmmmmmmmmmm, a bee ran through his brain.

He sat up. He shook his head. He put his hands to his ears. He blinked at the crashed ship. Hard metal. He felt the solid rock under his fingers. He saw the real sun warming the blue sky.

Let's try sleeping on our back, he thought. He adjusted himself, lying back down. His watch ticked on his wrist. The blood burned in his veins.

Sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sang the voices.

Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhh, sang the voices.

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh, sang the voices.

Die, die, die, die, die. Sleep, sleep, die, sleep, die, sleep, die! Oohhh. Ahhhhh. Eeeeeeeeeeeeeee!

Blood tapped in his ears. The sound of the wind rising.

Mine, mine, said a voice. *Mine, mine, he's mine!*

No, mine, mine, said another voice. *No, mine, mine; he's* mine!

No, ours, ours, sang ten voices. *Ours, ours, he's* ours!

His fingers twitched. His jaws spasmed. His eyelids jerked.

At last, at last, sang a high voice. *Now, now. The long time, the waiting. Over, over,* sang the high voice. *Over, over at last!*

It was like being undersea. Green songs, green visions, green time. Bubbled voices drowning in deep liquors of sea tide. Far away choruses chanting senseless rhymes. Leonard Sale stirred in agony.

Mine, mine, cried a loud voice. *Mine, mine!* shrieked another. *Ours, ours!* shrieked the chorus.

The din of metal, the crash of sword, the conflict, the battle, the fight, the war. All of it exploding, his mind fiercely torn apart!

Eeeeeeeeeeeee!

He leaped up, screaming. The landscape melted and flowed.

A voice said, "I am Tylle of Rathalar. Proud Tylle, Tylle of the Blood Mound and the Death Drum. Tylle of Rathalar, Killer of Men!"

Another spoke, "I am Iorr of Wendillo, Wise Iorr, Destroyer of Infidels!"

The chorus chanted. "And we the warriors, we the steel, we the warriors, we the red blood rushing, the red blood falling, the red blood steaming in the sun—"

Leonard Sale staggered under the burden. "Go away!" he cried. "Leave me, in God's name, leave me!"

Eeeeeeeeee, shrieked the high sound of steel hot on steel.

Silence.

. . .

He stood with the sweat boiling out of him. He was trembling so violently he could not stand. Insane, he thought. Absolutely insane. Raving insane. Insane.

He jerked the food kit open, did something to a chemical packet. Hot coffee was ready in an instant. He mouthed it, spilled gushes of it down his shirt. He shivered. He sucked in raw gulps of breath.

Let's be logical, he thought, sitting down heavily. The coffee seared his tongue. No record of insanity in the family for two hundred years. All healthy, well-balanced. No reason for insanity now. Shock? Silly. No shock. I'm to be rescued in six days. No shock to that. No danger. Just an ordinary planetoid. Ordinary, ordinary place. No reason for insanity. I'm sane.

Oh? cried a small metal voice within. An echo. Fading.

"Yes!" he cried, beating his fists together. "Sane!"

Hahahahahahahahahah. Somewhere a vanishing laughter.

He whirled about. "Shut up, you!" he cried.

We didn't say anything, said the mountains. We didn't say anything, said the sky. We didn't say anything, said the wreckage.

"All right then," he said, swaying. "See that you don't."

Everything was normal.

. . .

The pebbles were getting hot. The sky was big and blue. He looked at his fingers and saw the way the sun burned on every black hair. He looked at his boots and the dust on them. Suddenly he felt very happy because he made a decision. I won't go to sleep, he thought. I'm having nightmares, so why sleep. There's your solution.

He made a routine. From nine o'clock in the morning, which was this minute, until twelve, he would walk around and see the planetoid. He would write on a pad with a yellow pencil everything he saw. Then he would sit down and open a can of oily sardines and some canned fresh bread with good butter on it. From twelve-thirty until four he would read nine chapters of *War and Peace.* He

took the book from the wreckage, and laid it where he might find it later. There was a book of T. S. Eliot's poetry, too. That might be nice.

Supper would come at five-thirty and then from six until ten he would listen to the radio from Earth. There would be a couple of bad comedians telling jokes and a bad singer singing some song, and the latest news flashes, signing off at midnight with the UN anthem.

After that?

He felt sick.

I'll play solitaire until dawn, he thought. I'll sit up and drink hot black coffee and play solitaire, no cheating, until sunrise.

Ho ho, he thought.

"What did you say?" he asked himself.

"I said 'Ha ha,'" he replied. "*Some* time, you'll have to sleep."

"I'm wide awake," he said.

"Liar," he retorted, enjoying the conversation.

"I feel fine," he said.

"Hypocrite," he replied.

"I'm not afraid of the night, or sleep, or anything," he said.

"*Very* funny," he said.

He felt bad. He wanted to sleep. And the fact that he was afraid of sleep made him want to lie down all the more and shut his eyes and curl up. "Comfy-cozy?" asked his ironic censor.

"I'll just walk and look at the rocks and the geological formations and think how good it is to be alive," he said.

"Ye gods," cried his censor. "William Saroyan!"

You'll go on, he thought, maybe one day, maybe one night, but what about the next night and the next, and the *next*? Can you stay awake *all* that time, for six nights? Until the rescue ship comes? Are you *that* good, *that* strong?

The answer was no.

What are you afraid of? I don't know. Those voices. Those sounds. But they can't hurt you, can they?

They *might*. You've got to face them some time. Must I? Brace up to it, old man. Chin up, and all that rot.

He sat down on the hard ground. He felt very much like crying. He felt as if life was over and he was entering new and unknown territory. It was such a deceiving day, with the sun warm; physically, he felt able and well, one might fish on such a day as this, or pick flowers or kiss a woman or anything. But in the midst of a lovely day, what did one get?

Death.

Well, hardly *that*.

Death, he insisted.

He lay down and closed his eyes. He was tired of messing around.

All right, he thought, if you *are* death, come get me. I want to know what all this damned nonsense is about.

Death came.

. . .

Eeeeeeeeeeeee, said a voice.

Yes, I know, said Leonard Sale, lying there. But what else?

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh, said a voice.

I know that, also, said Leonard Sale, irritably. He turned cold. His mouth hung open wildly.

"I am Tylle of Rathalar, Killer of Men!"

"I am Iorr of Wendillo, Destroyer of Infidels!"

What is this place? asked Leonard Sale, struggling against horror.

"Once a mighty planet!" said Tylle of Rathalar.

"Once a place of battles!" said Iorr of Wendillo.

"Now dead," said Tylle.

"Now silent," said Iorr.

"Until *you* came," said Tylle.

"To give us life again," said Iorr.

You're dead, insisted Leonard Sale, flesh writhing. You're nothing but empty wind.

"We live, through you."

"And fight, through *you*!"

So that's it, thought Leonard Sale. I'm to be a battleground, am I? Are you friends?

"Enemies!" cried Iorr.

"Foul enemies!" cried Tylle.

. . .

Leonard smiled a rictal smile. He felt ghastly. How long have you waited? he demanded.

"How long is *time*?" Ten thousand years? "Perhaps." Ten million years? "Perhaps."

What are you? Thoughts, spirits, ghosts? "All of those, and more." Intelligences? "Precisely." How did you survive?

Eeeeeeeeeeeeeee, sang the chorus, far away.

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh, sang another army, waiting to fight.

"Once upon a time, this was fertile land, a rich planet. And there were two nations, strong nations, led by two strong men. I, Iorr. And he, that one who calls himself Tylle. And the planet declined and gave way to nothingness. The peoples and the armies languished in the midst of a great war which had lasted five thousand years. We lived long lives and loved long loves, drank much, slept

much, fought much. And when the planet died, our bodies withered, and, only in time, and with much science, did we survive."

Survive, wondered Leonard Sale. But there is nothing of you!

"Our *minds,* fool, our *minds*! What is a body without a mind?"

What is a mind without a *body,* laughed Leonard Sale. I've got you there. Admit it, I've *got* you!

"True," said the cruel voice. "One is useless lacking the other. But survival is survival even when unconscious. The minds of our nations, through science, through wonder, survived."

But without senses, lacking eyes, ears, lacking touch, smell, and the rest? "Lacking all those, yes. We were vapors, merely. For a long time. Until today."

And now I am here, thought Leonard Sale. "You are here," said the voice. "To give substance to our mentalities. To give us our needed body."

I'm only one, thought Sale. "Nevertheless, you are of use."

I'm an individual, thought Sale. I resent your intrusion.

"He resents our intrusion! Did you hear him, Iorr? He resents!"

"As if he had a right to resent!"

Be careful, warned Sale. I'll blink my eyes and you'll be gone, phantoms! I'll wake up and rub you out!

"But you'll have to sleep again, *some* time!" cried Iorr. "And when you do, we'll be here, waiting, waiting, waiting. For you."

What do you want? "Solidity. Mass. Sensation again." You can't *both* have it. "We'll fight that out between us."

A hot clamp twisted his skull. It was as if a spike had been thrust and beaten down between the bivalvular halves of his brain.

Now it was terribly clear. Horribly, magnificently clear. He was their universe. The world of his thoughts, his brain, his skull, divided into two camps, that of Iorr, that of Tylle. They were *using* him!

Pennants flung up on a pink mind sky! Brass shields caught the sun. Grey animals shifted and came rushing in bristling tides of sword and plume and trumpet.

Eeeeeeeeeeeeee! The rushing.

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhh! The roaring.

Nowwwwwwwww! The whirling.

Mmmmmmmmmmmm———

Ten thousand men hurtled across the small hidden stage. Ten thousand men floated on the shellacked inner ball of his eye. Ten thousand javelins hissed between the small bone hulls of his head. Ten thousand jeweled guns exploded. Ten thousand voices chanted in his ears. Now his body was riven and extended, shaken and rolled, he was screaming, writhing, the plates of his skull threatened to burst asunder. The gabbling, the shrilling, as, across bone plains of mind and continent of inner marrow, through gullies of vein, down hills of artery, over

rivers of melancholy, came armies and armies, one army, two armies, swords flashed in the sun, bearing down upon each other, fifty thousand minds snatching, scrabbling, cutting at him, demanding, using. In a moment, the hard collision, one army on another, the rush, the blood, the sound, the fury, the death, the insanity!

Like cymbals, the armies struck!

He leaped up, raving. He ran across the desert. He ran and ran and did not stop running.

He sat down and cried. He sobbed until his lungs ached. He cried very hard and long. Tears ran down his cheeks and into his upraised, trembling fingers. "God, God, help me, oh God, help me," he said.

All was normal again.

. . .

It was four o'clock in the afternoon. The rocks were baked by the sun. He managed, after a time, to cook himself a few hot biscuits, which he ate with strawberry jam. He wiped his stained fingers on his shirt, blindly, trying not to think.

"At least I know what I'm up against," he thought. "Oh, Lord, what a world. What an innocent looking world, and what a monster it really is. It's good no one ever explored it before. Or *did* they?" He shook his aching head. Pity them, who ever crashed here before, if any ever did. Warm sun, hard rocks, not a sign of hostility. A lovely world.

Until you shut your eyes and relaxed your mind.

And the night and the voices and the insanity and the death padded in on soft feet.

"I'm all right now, though," he said, proudly. "Look at that." He displayed his hand. By a supreme effort of will, it was no longer shaking. "I'll show you who in hell's ruler here," he announced to the innocent sky. "*I* am." He tapped his chest.

To think that *thought* could live that long! A million years, perhaps, all these thoughts of death and disorder and conquest, lingering in the innocent but poisonous air of the planet, waiting for a real man to give them a channel through which they might issue again in all their senseless virulence.

Now that he was feeling better, it was all silly. All I have to do, he thought, is stay awake six nights. They won't bother me that way. When I'm awake, I'm dominant. I'm stronger than those crazy monarchs and their silly tribes of sword-flingers and shield-bearers and horn-blowers. I'll stay awake.

But *can* you? he wondered. Six whole nights? Awake?

There's coffee and medicine and books and cards.

But I'm tired *now,* so tired, he thought. Can I hold out?

Well, if not. There's always the gun.

Where will these silly monarchs be if you put a bullet through their stage?

All the world's a stage? No. *You,* Leonard Sale, are the small stage. And they the players. And what if you put a bullet through the wings, tearing down scenes, destroying curtains, ruining lines! Destroy the stage, the players, all, if they aren't careful!

First of all, he must radio through to Marsport, again. If there was any way they could rush the rescue ship sooner, then maybe he could hang on. Anyway, he must warn them what sort of planet this was, this so innocent seeming spot of nightmare and fever vision———

He tapped on the radio key for a minute. His mouth tightened. The radio was dead.

It had sent through the proper rescue message, received a reply, and then extinguished itself.

The proper touch of irony, he thought. There was only one thing to do. Draw a plan.

This he did. He got a yellow pencil and delineated his six day plan of escape.

Tonight, he wrote, read six more chapters of *War and Peace.* At four in the morning have hot black coffee. At four-fifteen take cards from pack and play ten games of solitaire. This should take until six-thirty when—more coffee. At seven o'clock, listen to early morning programs from Earth, if the receiving equipment on the radio works at all. Does it?

He tried the radio receiver. It was dead.

Well, he wrote, from seven o'clock until eight, sing all the songs you remember, make your own entertainment. From eight until nine think about Helen King. Remember Helen. On second thought, think about Helen right now.

He marked that out with his pencil.

The rest of the days were set down in minute detail.

He checked the medical kit. There were several packets of tablets that would keep you awake. One tablet an hour every hour for six days. He felt quite confident.

"Here's mud in your evil eye, Iorr, Tylle!"

He swallowed one of the stay-wake tablets with a scalding mouth of black coffee.

. . .

Well, with one thing and another it was Tolstoy or Balzac, gin-rummy, coffee, tablets, walking, more Tolstoy, more Balzac, more gin-rummy, more solitaire. The first day passed, as did the second and the third.

On the fourth day he lay quietly in the shade of a rock, counting to a thousand by fives, then by tens, to keep his mind occupied and awake. His eyes were so tired he had to bathe them frequently in cool water. He couldn't read, he was bothered with splitting headaches. He was so exhausted he couldn't move. He

was numb with medicine. He resembled a waxen dummy, stuffed with things to preserve him in a state of horrified wakefulness. His eyes were glass, his tongue a rusted pike, his fingers felt as if they were gloved in needles and fur.

He followed the hand of his watch. One second less to wait, he thought. Two seconds, three seconds, four, five, ten, thirty seconds. A whole minute. Now an hour less time to wait. Oh, ship, hurry on thy appointed round!

He began to laugh softly.

What would happen if he just gave up, drifted off into sleep? Sleep, ah, sleep; perchance to dream. All the world a stage . . . What if he gave up the unequal struggle, lapsed down?

Eeeeeeeeee, the high, shrill warning sound of battle metal.

He shivered. His tongue moved in his dry, burry mouth.

Iorr and Tylle would battle out their ancient battle.

Leonard Sale would become quite insane.

And whichever won the battle, would take this ruin of an insane man, the shaking, laughing wild body, and wander it across the face of this world for ten, twenty years, occupying it, striding in it, pompous, holding court, making grand gestures, ordering heads severed, calling on inward unseen dancing girls. Leonard Sale, what remained of him, would be led off to some hidden cave, there to be infested with wars and worms of wars for twenty insane years, occupied and prostituted by old and outlandish thoughts.

When the rescue ship arrived it would find nothing. Sale would be hidden somewhere by a triumphant army in his head. Hidden in some cleft of rock, placed there like a nest for Iorr to lie upon in evil occupation.

The thought of it almost broke him in half.

Twenty years of insanity. Twenty years of torture, doing what you don't want to do. Twenty years of wars raging and being split apart, twenty years of nausea and trembling.

His head sank down between his knees. His eyes snapped and cracked and made soft noises. His eardrum popped tiredly.

Sleep, sleep, sang soft sea voices.

I'll—I'll make a proposition with you, listen, thought Leonard Sale. You, Iorr, you, too, Tylle! Iorr, you can occupy me on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Tylle, you can take me over on Sundays, Tuesdays and Saturdays. Thursday is maid's night out. Okay?

Eeeeeeeeeeeee, sang the sea tides, seething in his brain.

Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhh, sang the distant voices softly, soft.

What'll you say, is it a *bargain,* Iorr, Tylle?

No, said a voice.

No, said another.

Greedy, both of you, greedy! complained Sale. A pox on both your houses! He slept.

. . .

He *was* Iorr, jeweled rings on his hands. He arose beside his rocket and held out his fingers, commanding blind armies. He was Iorr, ancient ruler of jeweled warriors.

He *was* Tylle, lover of women, killer of dogs!

With some hidden bit of awareness, his hand crept to the holster at his hip. The sleeping hand withdrew the gun there. The hand lifted, the gun pointed.

The armies of Tylle and Iorr gave battle.

The gun exploded.

The bullet tore across Sale's forehead, wakening him.

He stayed awake for another six hours, getting over his latest siege. He knew it to be hopeless now. He washed and bandaged the wound he had given himself. He wished he had aimed straighter and it was all over. He watched the sky. Two more days. Two more. Come on, ship, come on. He was heavy with sleeplessness.

No use. At the end of six hours he was raving badly. He took the gun up and put it down and took it up again, put it against his head, tightened his hand on the trigger, changed his mind, looked at the sky again.

Night settled. He tried to read, threw the book away. He tore it up and burned it, just to have something to do.

So tired. In another hour, he decided. If nothing happens, I'll kill myself. This is for certain now. I'll *do* it, this time.

He got the gun ready and laid it on the ground next to himself.

He was very calm now, though tired. It would be over and done. He would be dead.

He watched the minute hand of his watch. One minute, five minutes, twenty-five minutes.

The flame appeared on the sky.

It was so unbelievable he started to cry. "A rocket," he said, standing up. "A rocket!" he cried, rubbing his eyes. He ran forward.

The flame brightened, grew, came down.

He waved frantically, running forward, leaving his gun, his supplies, everything behind. "You *see* that, Iorr, Tylle! You savages, you monsters, I beat you! I *won!* They're coming to rescue me now! I've won, damn you."

He laughed harshly at the rocks and the sky and the backs of his hands.

The rocket landed. Leonard Sale stood swaying, waiting for the door to lid open.

"Goodbye, Iorr, goodbye, Tylle!" he shouted in triumph, grinning, eyes hot.

Eeeeee, sang a diminishing roar in time.

Ahhhhhh, voices faded.

The rocket flipped wide its air-lock. Two men jumped out.

"Sale?" they called. "We're Ship ACDN13. Intercepted your SOS and decided to pick you up ourselves. The Marsport ship won't get through until day after tomorrow. We want a spot of rest ourselves. Thought it'd be good to spend the night here, pick you up, and go on."

"No," said Sale, face melting with terror. "No spend night———"

He couldn't talk. He fell to the ground.

"Quick," said a voice, in the bleary vortex over him. "Give him a shot of food liquid, another of sedative. He needs sustenance and rest."

"No rest!" screamed Sale.

"Delirious," said one man softly.

"No sleep!" screamed Sale.

"There, there," said the man gently. A needle poked into Sale's arm.

Sale thrashed. "No sleep, go!" he mouthed horribly. "Oh, go!"

"Delirious," said one man. "Shock."

"No *sedative*!" screamed Sale.

The sedative flowed into him.

Eeeeeeeeeee, sang the ancient winds.

Ahhhhhhhhhhh, sang the ancient seas.

"No sedative, no sleep, please, don't, don't, *don't*!" screamed Sale, trying to get up. "You don't———understand!"

"Take it easy, old man, you're safe among us now, nothing to worry about," said the rescuer above him.

Leonard Sale slept. The two men stood over him.

As they watched, Sale's features changed violently. He groaned and cried and snarled in his sleep. His face was riven with emotion. It was the face of a saint, a sinner, a fiend, a monster, a darkness, a light, one, many, an army, a vacuum, all, all!

He writhed in his sleep.

Eeeeeeeee! the sound burst from his mouth. *Ahhhhhhhhhh*! he screamed.

"What's wrong with him?" asked one of the two rescuers.

"I don't know. More sedative?"

"More sedative. Nerves. He needs more sleep."

They stuck the needle in his arm. Sale writhed and spat and moaned.

Then, suddenly, he was dead.

He lay there, the two men over him. "What a shame," said one of them. "Can you figure that?"

"Shock. Poor guy. What a pity." They covered his face. "Did you ever see a face like that?"

"Totally insane."

"Loneliness. Shock."

"Yes. Lord, what an expression. I hope never to see a face like *that* again."

"What a shame, waiting for us, and we arrive, and he dies anyway."

They glanced around. "What shall we do? Shall we spend the night?"

"Yes. It's good to be out of the ship."

"We'll bury him first, of course."

"Naturally."

"And spend the night in the open, with good air, right? Good to be in the open again. After two weeks in that damned ship."

"Right. I'll find a spot for him. You start supper, eh?"

"Done."

"Should be good sleeping tonight."

"Fine, fine."

They made a grave and said a word over it. They drank their evening coffee silently. They smelled the sweet air of the planet and looked at the lovely sky and the bright and beautiful stars.

"What a night," they said, lying down.

"Pleasant dreams," said one, rolling over.

And the other replied, "Pleasant dreams."

They slept.

SEVEN

REFERENT

Roby Morrison fidgeted. Walking in the tropical heat he heard the wet thunder of waves on the shore. There was a green silence on Orthopedic Island.

It was the year 1997, but Roby did not care.

All around him was the garden where he prowled, all ten years of him. This was Meditation Hour. Beyond the garden wall, to the north, were the High I.Q. Cubicles where he and the other boys slept in special beds. With morning they popped up like bottle-corks, dashed into showers, gulped food, and were sucked down vacuum-tubes half across the island to Semantics School. Then to Physiology. After Physiology he was blown back underground and released through a seal in the great garden wall to spend this silly hour of meditative frustration, as prescribed by the island Psychologists.

Roby had his opinion of it. "Damned silly."

Today, he was in furious rebellion. He glared at the sea, wishing he had the sea's freedom to come and go. His eyes were dark, his cheeks flushed, his small hands twitched nervously.

Somewhere in the garden a chime vibrated softly. Fifteen more minutes of meditation. Huh! And then to the Robot Commissary to stuff his dead hunger as taxidermists stuff birds.

And, after the scientifically pure lunch, through the tube again to Sociology. Of course, late in the warm green afternoon, games would be played in the Main Garden. Games some tremble-brained Psychologist had evolved from a nightmare haunted sleep. This was the future! You must live, my lad, as the people of the past, of the year 1920, 1930 and 1942 predicted you would live! Everything fresh, brisk, sanitary, too, too fresh! No nasty old parents about to give one complexes. Everything controlled, dear boy!

Roby should have been in a perfect mood for something unique.

He wasn't.

. . .

When the star fell from the sky a moment later he was only more irritated.

The star was a spheroid. It crashed and rolled to a stop on the hot green grass. A small door popped open in it.

Faintly, this incident recalled a dream to the child. A dream which with superior stubbornness he had refused to record in his Freud Book this morning. The dream-thought was in his mind at the exact instant that the star-door popped wide and some 'thing' emerged.

Some 'thing'.

Young eyes, seeing an object for the first time, have to make a familiar thing of it. Roby didn't know what this 'thing' was stepping from the sphere. So, scowling, Roby thought of what it *most resembled.*

Instantly the 'something' became a *certain* thing.

Warm air ran cold. Light flickered, form changed, melted, shifted as the thing evolved into certainty!

Startled, a tall thin pale man stood beside the metal star.

The man had pink, terrified eyes. He trembled.

"Oh, I know *you.*" Roby was disappointed. "You're only the Sandman."

"Sand—man?"

The stranger quivered like heat rising from boiling metal. His shaking hands went wildly up to touch his long coppery hair as if he'd never seen or felt it before. The Sandman gazed in horror at his own hands, legs, feet, body, as if they were all new. "Sand—man?" The word was difficult. Talking was new to him, also. He seemed about to flee, but something stopped him.

"Yeah," said Roby. "I dream about you every night. Oh, I know what you think. Semantically, our teachers say that ghosts, goblins and fairies and sandmen are labels, only names for which there aren't any actual referents, no actual objects or things. But to heck with that. We kids know more than teachers about it. You being here proves the teachers wrong. There are Sandmen after all, aren't there?"

"Don't give me a label!" cried the Sandman, suddenly. He seemed to understand now. For some reason he was unutterably frightened. He kept pinching, tugging and feeling his own long new body as if it was a thing of terror. "Don't *name* me, don't label me!"

"Huh?"

"I'm a referent!" screamed the Sandman. "I'm not a label! I'm just a referent! Let me go!"

Roby's little green cat-eyes slitted. "Say—" He put his hands on his hips. "Did Mister Grill send you? I bet he did! I bet this is another of those psychological tests!"

Roby flushed with dark anger. Always and forever they were at him. They sorted his games, food, education, took away his friends and his mother, his father, and now—played tricks on him!

"I'm not from Mr. Grill," pleaded the Sandman. "Listen, before anyone else comes and sees me this way and makes it worse!"

Roby kicked violently. The Sandman danced back, gasping:

"Listen. I'm not human, you are!" he shouted. "Thought has moulded the flesh of all you here on this world! You're all dictated to by labels. But I—I am a *pure* referent!"

"Liar!" More kicking from Roby.

The Sandman gibbered with frustration. "The truth, child! Centuries of thought have moulded your atoms to your present form; if you could undermine and destroy that belief, the beliefs of your friends, teachers and parents, you could change form, be a pure referent, too! Like Freedom, Liberty, Humanity, or Time, Space and Justice!"

"Grill sent you; he's always pestering me!"

"No, no! Atoms are malleable. You've accepted certain labels on Earth, called Man, Woman, Child, Head, Hands, Fingers, Feet. You've changed from anything into something."

"Leave me alone," protested Roby. "I've a test today, I have to think." He sat on a rock, hands over his ears.

. . .

The Sandman glanced fearfully about, as if expecting disaster. Standing over Roby, he was beginning to tremble and cry. "Earth could have been a thousand other ways. Thought, using labels, went around tidying up a disordered cosmos. Now, no one bothers trying to think things into other, different shapes!"

"Go away," sniffed Roby.

"I landed near you, not suspecting the danger. I was curious. Inside my spheroid space ship, thoughts cannot change my shape. I've traveled from world to world, over the centuries, and never been trapped like *this!*" Tears sprang down his face. "And now, by the gods, you've labeled me, caught me, imprisoned me with thought! This Sandman idea. Horrible! I can't fight it, I can't change back! And if I can't change back I'll never fit into my ship again, I'm much too large. I'll be stranded on Earth, forever. Release me!"

The Sandman screamed, wept, shouted. Roby's mind wandered. He debated quietly with himself. What did he want most of all? Escape from this island. Silly. They always caught you. What then? Games, maybe. He liked to play regular games, minus psycho-supervision. Yeah, that'd be nice. Kick-the-can, or spin-the-bottle, or even just a rubber ball to bounce on the garden wall and catch, all to himself. Yeah. A red ball.

The Sandman cried, "Don't—"

Silence.

A red rubber ball bounced on the ground.

Up and down bounced the red rubber ball.

"Hey!" It took Roby a moment to realize the ball was there. "Where'd this come from?" He hurled it against the wall, caught it. "Gee!"

He didn't notice the absence of a certain stranger who had been shouting at him a few moments before.

The Sandman was gone.

• • •

Way off in the hot distance of the garden a bonging noise sounded. A cylinder was rushing up the tube to the wall's circular door. The door peeled open with a faint hiss. Footsteps rustled measuredly along the path. Mister Grill stepped through a lush frame of tiger-lillies.

"Morning, Roby. Oh!" Mister Grill stopped, his chubby pink face looked as if it had been kicked. "What have you there, boy?" he cried.

Roby bounced the object against the wall.

"This? A rubber ball."

"Eh?" Grill's small blue eyes blinked, narrowing. Then he relaxed. "Why, of course. For a moment I thought I saw—uh—er—"

Roby bounced the ball some more.

Grill cleared his throat. "Lunch time. Meditation Hour is over. And I'm not certain that Minister Locke would enjoy your playing unorthodox games."

Roby swore under his breath.

"Oh, well, then, go on. Play. I won't tattle." Mr. Grill was in a generous mood.

"Don't feel like playing." Roby sulked, shoving his sandal-tip into the dirt. Teachers spoiled everything. You couldn't vomit without permission.

Grill tried to interest the boy. "If you come to lunch now I'll let you televise your mother in Chicago afterward."

"Time limit, two minutes, ten seconds, no more no less," was Roby's acid reply.

"I gather you don't approve of things, boy."

"I'll run away some day, wait and see!"

"Tut, lad. We'll always bring you back, you know."

"I didn't ask to be brought here in the first place." Roby bit his lip, staring at his new red rubber ball. He thought he had seen it kind of, sort of, well—*move.* Funny. He held the ball in his hand. The ball shivered.

Grill patted his shoulder. "Your mother is neurotic. Bad environment. You're better off here on the island. You have a high I.Q. and it is an honor for you to be here with the other little boy geniuses. You're unstable and unhappy and we're trying to change that. Eventually you'll be the exact antithesis of your mother."

"I love mother!"

"You *like* her," corrected Grill, quietly.

"I like mother," replied Roby, disquieted. The red ball twitched in his hand, without his touching it. He looked at it with wonder.

"You'll only make it harder for yourself if you love her," said Grill.

"You're god-damn silly," said Roby.

Grill stiffened. "Don't swear. Besides, you don't really mean god and you don't mean damn. There's very little of either in the world. Semantics Book Seven, page 418, Labels and Referents."

"Now, I remember," shouted Roby, looking around. "There was a Sandman here just now and he said—"

"Come along," said Mr. Grill. "Lunch time."

. . .

Commissary food emerged from robot-servers on extension springs. Roby accepted the ovoid plate and milk-globe silently. Where he had hidden it, the red rubber ball pulsed and beat like a heart under his belt. A gong rang. He gulped food swiftly. The tumble for the tube began. They were blown like feathers across the island to Sociology and then, later in the afternoon, back again for games. Hours passed.

Roby slipped away to the garden to be alone. Hatred for this insane, never-stopping routine, for his teachers and his fellow students flashed through him in a scouring torrent. He sat alone and thought of his mother, a long distance away. In great detail he recalled how she looked and what she smelled like and how her voice was and how she touched and held and kissed him. He put his head down into his hands and began to fill the palms of his hands with small tears.

He dropped the red rubber ball.

He didn't care. He only thought of his mother.

The jungle shivered. Something shifted, quickly.

A woman ran through the deep grass!

She ran away from Roby, slipped, cried out, and fell.

Something glittered in the sunlight. The woman was running toward that silvery glittering thing. The spheroid. The silver star ship! And where had *she* come from? And why was she running toward the sphere? And why had she fallen as he looked up? She didn't seem to be able to get up.

Roby leaped from his rock, gave chase. He caught up with and stood over the woman.

"Mother!" he screamed.

Her face shivered and changed, like melting snow, then took on a hard cast, became definite and handsome.

"I'm not your mother," she said.

He didn't hear. He only heard his own breath moving over his shaking lips. He was so weak with shock he could hardly stand. He put out his hands toward her.

"Can't you understand?" her face was cold. "I'm not your mother. Don't label me! Why must I have a name! Let me get back to my ship! I'll kill you if you don't!"

Roby swayed. "Mother, don't you know me? I'm Roby, your son!" He wanted only to cry against her, tell her of the long months of imprisonment. "Please, please, Mom, please remember me!"

Sobbing, he moved forward and fell against her.

Her fingers tightened on his throat.

She strangled him.

He tried to scream. The scream was caught, pressed back into his bursting lungs. He flailed his legs.

Deep in her cold hard, angry face, Roby found the answer even as her fingers tightened and things grew dark.

Deep in her face he saw a vestige of the Sandman.

The Sandman. The star falling on the summer sky. The silver sphere, the ship toward which this 'woman' had been running. The disappearance of the Sandman, the appearance of the red ball, the vanishing of the red ball and now the appearance of his mother. It all fitted!

Matrixes. Moulds. Thought habits. Patterns. Matter. The history of man, his body, all things in the universe.

She was killing him.

She would make him stop thinking, then she would be free.

Thoughts. Darkness. He could barely move, now. Weak, weak. He had thought 'it' was his mother. It wasn't. Nevertheless 'it' was killing him. What if Roby thought something else? Try, anyway. Try it. He kicked. In the wild darkness he thought, hard, hard.

With a wail, his 'mother' withered before him.

He concentrated.

Her fingers dwindled from his throat. Her bright face crumbled. Her body shrank to another size.

. . .

He was free. He rose up, gasping. Through the jungle he saw the silver sphere lying in the sun. He staggered toward it, then cried out with the sharp thrill of the plan that formed in his mind.

He laughed triumphantly. He stared once more at 'it'. What was left of the woman form changed before his eyes, like melting wax. He reshaped it into something new.

The garden wall trembled. A vacuum cylinder was hissing up through the tube. Mr. Grill was coming. Roby would have to hurry or his plan would be ruined.

Roby ran to the spheroid, peered in. Simple controls. Just enough room for his small body—*if* the plan worked. It had to work. It would work.

The garden trembled with the approaching thunder of the cylinder. Roby laughed. To hell with Mister Grill! To hell with this island!

He thrust himself into the ship. There was much he could learn, it would come in time. He was just on the skirt of knowledge now, but that little knowledge had saved his life, and now it would do even more.

A voice cried out behind him. A familiar voice. So familiar that it made Roby shudder. Roby heard small boy feet crash the underbrush. Small feet on a small body. A small voice pleading!

Roby grasped the ship controls. Escape. Complete and unsuspected. Simple. Wonderful. Grill would never know.

The sphere door slammed. Motion.

The star, Roby inside, rose on the summer sky.

. . .

Mr. Grill stepped out of the seal in the garden wall. He looked around for Roby. Sunlight struck him warmly in the face as he hurried down the path.

There! There was Roby. In the clearing ahead of him. Little Roby Morrison staring at the sky, making fists, crying out to nobody. At least Grill could see nobody about.

"Hello, Roby," called Grill.

The boy jerked at the sound. He—wavered—in color, density, and quality. Grill blinked, decided it was only the sun.

"I'm not Roby!" cried the child. "Roby escaped! He left me to take his place, to fool you so you wouldn't hunt for him! He fooled me, too!" screamed the child, nastily, sobbing. "No, no, don't *look* at me! Don't think that I'm Roby, you'll make it worse! You came expecting to find him, and you found me and made me into Roby! You're moulding me and I'll never, never, *never* change, now! Oh, God!"

"Come now, Roby—"

"Roby'll never come back. I'll *always* be him. I was a rubber ball, a woman, a Sandman. But, believe me, I'm only malleable atoms, that's all. Let me go!"

Grill backed up slowly. His smile was sick.

"I'm a referent, I'm *not* a label!" cried the child.

"Yes, yes, I understand. Now, now, Roby, Roby, you just wait right there, right there now, while I, while I, while I call the Psycho-Ward."

Moments later, a corps of assistants ran through the garden.

"God damn you all!" screamed the child, kicking. "Damn you!"

"Tut," declared Grill quietly, as they forced the child into the vac-cylinder. "You're using a label for which there is no referent!"

The cylinder sucked them away.

A star blinked on the summer sky and vanished.

EIGHT

THE CALCULATOR (JONAH OF THE JOVE-RUN)

Nibley stood in the changing shadows and sounds of Marsport, watching the great supply ship *Terra* being entered and left by a number of officials and mechanics. Something had happened. Something was wrong. There were a lot of hard faces and not much talk. There was a bit of swearing and everybody looked up at the night sky of Mars, waiting.

But nobody came to Nibley for his opinion or his help. He stood there, a very old man, with a slack-gummed face and eyes like the little bubbly stalks of crayfish looking up at you from a clear creek. He stood there fully neglected. He stood there and talked to himself.

"They don't want me, or need me," he said. "Machines are better, nowadays. Why should they want an old man like me with a taste for Martian liquor? They shouldn't! A machine isn't old and foolish, and doesn't get drunk!"

Way out over the dead sea bottoms, Nibley sensed something moving. Part of himself was suddenly awake and sensitive. His small sharp eye moved in his withered face. Something inside of his small skull reacted and he shivered. He *knew.* He knew that what these men were watching and waiting for would never come.

Nibley edged up to one of the astrogators from the *Terra.* He touched him on the shoulder. "Say," he said. "I'm busy," said the astrogator. "I know," said Nibley, "but if you're waiting for that small repair rocket to come through with the extra auxiliary asteroid computator on it, you're wasting your time."

"Like hell," said the astrogator, glaring at the old man. "That repair rocket's got to come through, and quick; we need it. It'll get here."

"No, it won't," said Nibley, sadly, and shook his head and closed his eyes. "It just crashed, a second ago, out on the dead sea bottom. I — *felt* — it crash. I sensed it going down. It'll never come through."

"Go away, old man," said the astrogator. "I don't want to hear that kind of talk. It'll come through. Sure, sure, it has to come through." The astrogator turned away and looked at the sky, smoking a cigarette.

"I know it as a fact," said Nibley, but the young astrogator wouldn't listen. He didn't want to hear the truth. The truth was not a pleasant thing. Nibley went on,

to himself. "I know it for a fact, just like I was always able to know the course of meteors with my mind, or the orbits or parabolas of asteroids. I tell you—"

The men stood around waiting and smoking. They didn't know yet about the crash out there. Nibley felt a great sorrow rise in himself for them. That ship meant a great deal to them and now it had crashed. Perhaps their lives had crashed with it.

A loudspeaker on the outer area of the landing tarmac opened out with a voice: "Attention, crew of the *Terra*. The repair ship just radioed in a report that it has been fired upon from somewhere over the dead seas. It crashed a minute ago."

The report was so sudden and quiet and matter-of-fact that the standing smoking men did not for a moment understand it.

Then, each in his own way, they reacted to it. Some of them ran for the radio building to verify the report. Others sat down and put their hands over their faces. Still more of them stood staring at the sky as if staring might put the repair ship back together again and get it here safe and intact. Instinctively, at last, all of them looked up at the sky.

Jupiter was there, with its coterie of moons, bright and far away. Part of their lives lived on Jupiter. Most of them had children and wives there and certain duties to perform to insure the longevity of said children and wives. Now, with the speaking of a few words over a loudspeaker, the distance to Jupiter was suddenly an immense impossibility.

The captain of the Rocket *Terra* walked across the field slowly. He stopped several times to try and light a cigarette, but the night wind blew it out. He stood in the rocket shadow and looked up at Jupiter and swore quietly, again and again and finally threw down his cigarette and heeled it with his shoe.

Nibley walked up and stood beside the captain.

"Captain Kroll . . ."

Kroll turned. "Oh, hello, Grandpa—"

"Tough luck."

"Yeah. Yeah. I guess that's what you'd call it. Tough luck."

"You're going to take off anyway, Captain?"

"Sure," said Kroll quietly, looking at the sky. "Sure."

"How's the protective computator on board your ship?"

"Not so hot. Bad, in fact. It might conk out before we get half way through the asteroids."

"That's not good," said Nibley.

"It's lousy. I feel sick. I need a drink. I wish I was dead. I wish we'd never started this damned business of being damned pioneers. My family's up there!" He jerked his hand half way to Jupiter, violently. He settled down and tried to light another cigarette. No go. He threw it down after the other.

"Can't get through the asteroids without an asteroid computator to protect you, without that old radar set-up, Captain," said Nibley, blinking wetly. He shuffled his small feet around in the red dust.

"We had an auxiliary computator on that repair ship coming from Earth," said Kroll, standing there. "And it had to crash."

"The Martians shoot it down, you think?"

"Sure. They don't like us going up to Jupiter. They got claims there, too. They'd like to see our colony die out. Best way to kill a colony is starve the colony. Starve the people. That means my family and lots of families. Then when you starve out the families the Martians can step in and take over, damn their filthy souls!"

. . .

Kroll fell silent. Nibley shifted around. He walked around in front of Kroll so Kroll would see him. "Captain?"

Kroll didn't even look at him.

Nibley said, "Maybe I can help."

"You?"

"You heard about me, Captain! You heard about me."

"What about you?"

"You can't wait a month for another auxiliary computator to come through from Earth. You got to push off tonight, to Jupiter, to get to your family and the colony and all that, Captain, sure!" Nibley was hasty, he sort of fidgeted around, his voice high, and excited. "An' if your only computator conks out in the middle of the asteroids, well, you know what that means. Bang! No more ship! No more you. No more colony on Jupiter! Now, you know about me, my ability, you know, you heard."

Kroll was cool and quiet and far away. "I heard about you, old man. I heard lots. They say you got a funny brain and do things machines can't do. I don't know. I don't like the idea.

"But you got to like the idea, Captain. I'm the only one can help you now!"

"I don't trust you. I heard about your drinking that time and wrecking that ship. I remember that."

"But I'm not drinking now. See. Smell my breath, go ahead! You see?"

Kroll stood there. He looked at the ship and he looked at the sky and then at Nibley. Finally he sighed. "Old man, I'm leaving right now. I might just as well take you along as leave you. You might do some good. What can I lose?"

"Not a damned thing, Captain, and you won't be sorry," cried Nibley.

"Step lively, then!"

They went to the Rocket, Kroll running, Nibley hobbling along after.

Trembling excitedly, Nibley stumbled into the Rocket. Everything had a hot

mist over it. First time on a rocket in—ten years, by god. Good. Good to be aboard again. He smelled it. It smelled fine. It felt fine. Oh, it was very fine indeed. First time since that trouble he got into off the planet Venus . . . he brushed that thought away. That was over and past.

He followed Kroll up through the ship to a small room in the prow.

Men ran up and down the rungs. Men who had families out there on Jupiter and were willing to go through the asteroids with a faulty radar set-up to reach those families and bring them the necessary cargo of machinery and food they needed to go on.

Out of a warm mist, old Nibley heard himself being introduced to a third man in the small room.

"Douglas, this is Nibley, our auxiliary computating machine."

"A poor time for joking, Captain."

"It's no joke," cried Nibley. "Here I am."

Douglas eyed Nibley with a very cold and exact eye. "No," he said. "No. I can't use him. I'm computant-mechanic."

"And I'm captain," said Kroll.

Douglas looked at Kroll. "We'll shove through to Jupiter with just our leaky set of radar computators; that's the way it'll have to be. If we're wrecked halfway, well, we're wrecked. But I'll be damned if I go along with a decrepit son-of-a-witch-doctor!"

Nibley's eyes watered. He sucked in on himself. There was a pain round his heart and he was suddenly chilled.

Kroll started to speak, but a gong rattled and banged and a voice shouted, "Stations! Gunners up! Hammocks! Takeoff!"

"Takeoff!"

"Stay here!" Kroll snapped it at the old man. He leaped away and down the rungs of the ladder, leaving Nibley alone in the broad shadow of the bitter-eyed Douglas. Douglas looked him up and down in surly contempt. "So you know arcs, parabolas and orbits as good as my machines, do you?"

Nibley nodded, angry now that Kroll was gone:

"Machines," shrilled Nibley. "Can't do everything! They ain't got no intuition. Can't understand sabotage and hatreds and arguments. Or people. Machines're too damn slow!"

Douglas lidded his eyes. "You—*you're* faster?"

"I'm faster," said Nibley.

Douglas flicked his cigarette toward a wall-disposal slot.

"Predict that orbit!"

Nibley's eyes jerked. "Gonna miss it!"

The cigarette lay smouldering on the deck.

Douglas scowled at the cigarette.

Nibley made wheezy laughter. He minced to his shock-hammock, zipped into it. "Not bad, not bad, eh?"

The ship rumbled.

Angrily, Douglas snatched up the cigarette, carried it to his own hammock, rolled in, zipped the zipper, then, deliberately, he flicked the cigarette once more. It flew.

"Another miss," predicted Nibley.

Douglas was still glaring at the floored cigarette when the Rocket burst gravity and shot up into space toward the asteroids.

. . .

Mars dwindled into the sun. Asteroids swept silently down the star-tracks, all metal, all invisible, shifting and shifting to harry the Rocket—

Nibley sprawled by the great thick visiport feeling the computators giving him competition under the floor in the level below, predicting meteors and correcting the *Terra*'s course accordingly.

Douglas stood behind Nibley, stiff and quiet. Since he was computant-mechanic, Nibley was his charge. He was to protect Nibley from harm. Kroll had said so. Douglas didn't like it at all.

Nibley was feeling fine. It was like the old days. It was good. He laughed. He waved at nothing outside the port. "Hi, there!" he called. "Meteor," he explained in an aside to Douglas. "You see it?"

"Lives at stake and you sit there playing."

"Nope. Not playin'. Just warmin' up. I can see 'em beatin' like hell all up and down the line, son. God's truth."

"Kroll's a damned fool," said Douglas. "Sure, you had a few lucky breaks in the old days before they built a good computator. A few lucky breaks and you lived off them. Your day's done."

"I'm *still* good."

"How about the time you swilled a quart of rot-gut and almost killed a cargo of civilian tourists? I heard about that. All I have to say is one word and your ears'd twitch. Whiskey."

At the word, saliva ran alarmingly in Nibley's mouth. He swallowed guiltily. Douglas, snorting, turned and started from the room. Nibley grabbed a monkey-wrench on impulse, heaved it. The wrench hit the wall and fell down. Nibley wheezed, "Wrench got an orbit like everything. Fair bit of computation I did. One point over and I'd have flanked that crumb!"

There was silence now, as he hobbled back and sat wearily to stare into the stars. He felt all of the ship's men around him. Vague warm electrical stirrings of

fear, hope, dismay, exhaustion. All their orbits coming into a parallel trajectory now. All living in the same path with him. And the asteroids smashed down with an increasing swiftness. In a very few hours the main body of missiles would be encountered.

Now, as he stared into space he felt a dark orbit coming into conjunction with his own. It was an unpleasant orbit. One that touched him with fear. It drew closer. It was dark. It was very close now.

A moment later a tall man in a black uniform climbed the rungs from below and stood looking at Nibley.

"I'm Bruno," he said. He was a nervous fellow, and kept looking around, looking around, at the walls, the deck, at Nibley. "I'm food specialist on board. How come you're up here? Come down to mess later. Join me in a game of Martian chess."

Nibley said, "I'd beat the hell out of you. Wouldn't pay. It's against orders for me to be down below, anyways."

"How come?"

"Never you never mind. Got things to do up here. I *notice* things. I'm chartin' a special course in a special way. Even Captain Kroll don't know *every* reason why I'm makin' this trip. Got my own personal reasons. I see 'em comin' and goin', and I got their orbits picked neat and dandy. Meteors, planets *and* men. Why, let me tell you—"

Bruno tensed somewhat forward. His face was a little too interested. Nibley didn't like the feel of the man. He was off-trajectory. He — smelled — funny. He *felt* funny.

Nibley shut up. "Nice day," he said.

"Go ahead," said Bruno. "You were saying?"

Douglas stepped up the rungs. Bruno cut it short, saluted Douglas, and left.

Douglas watched him go, coldly. "What'd Bruno want?" he asked of the old man. "Captain's orders, you're to see *nobody*."

Nibley's wrinkles made a smile. "Watch that guy Bruno. I got his orbit fixed all round and arced. I see him goin' now, and I see him reachin' aphelion and I see him comin' back."

Douglas pulled his lip. "You think Bruno might be working for the Martian industrial *clique?* If I thought he had anything to do with stopping us from getting to the Jovian colony—"

"He'll be back," said Nibley. "Just before we reach the *heavy* Asteroid Belt. Wait and see."

The ship swerved. The computators had just dodged a meteor. Douglas smiled. That griped Nibley. The machines were stealing his feathers. Nibley paused and closed his eyes.

"Here come two more meteors! I beat the machine this time!"

They waited. The ship swerved, twice.

"Damn it," said Douglas.

. . .

Two hours passed. "It got lonely upstairs," said Nibley apologetically.

Captain Kroll glanced nervously up from the mess-table where he and twelve other men sat. Williams, Simpson, Haines, Bruno, McClure, Leiber, and the rest. All were eating, but not hungry. They all looked a little sick. The ship was swerving again and again, steadily, steadily, back and forth. In a short interval the Heavy Belt would be touched. Then there would be real sickness.

"Okay," said Kroll to Nibley. "You can eat with us, this once. And only this once, remember that."

Nibley ate like a starved weasel. Bruno looked over at him again and again and finally asked, "How about that chess game?"

"Nope. I always win. Don't want to brag but I was the best outfielder playing baseball when I was at school. Never struck out at bat, neither. Damn good."

Bruno cut a piece of meat. "What's your business now, Gramps?"

"Findin' out where things is goin'," evaded Nibley.

Kroll snapped his gaze at Nibley. The old man hurried on, "Why, I know where the whole blamed universe is headin'." Everybody looked up from their eating. "But you wouldn't believe me if I told you," laughed the old man.

Somebody whistled. Others chuckled. Kroll relaxed. Bruno scowled. Nibley continued, "It's a feelin'. You can't describe stars to a blind man, or God to anybody. Why, hell's bells, lads, if I wanted I could write a formula on paper and if you worked it out in your mind you'd drop dead of symbol poison."

Again laughter. A bit of wine was poured all around as a bracer for the hours ahead. Nibley eyed the forbidden stuff and got up. "Well, I got to go." "Have some wine," said Bruno. "No, thanks," said Nibley. "Go ahead, have some," said Bruno. "I don't like it," said Nibley, wetting his lips. "That's a laugh," said Bruno, eyeing him. "I got to go upstairs. Nice to have ate with you boys. See you later, after we get through the Swarms—"

Faces became wooden at the mention of the approaching Belt. Fingers tightened against the table edge. Nibley spidered back up the rungs to his little room alone.

An hour later, Nibley was drunk as a chromium-plated pirate.

He kept it a secret. He hid the wine-bottle in his shock hammock, groggily. Stroke of luck. Oh yes, oh yes, a stroke, a stroke of luck, yes, yes, yes, finding that lovely fine wonderful wine in the storage cabinet near the visiport. Why, yes! And since he'd been thirsty for so long, so long, so long. Well? Gurgle, gurgle!

Nibley was drunk.

He swayed before the visiport, drunkenly deciding the trajectories of a thousand invisible nothings. Then he began to argue with himself, drowsily, as he always argued when wine-webs were being spun through his skull by red, drowsy spiders. His heart beat dully. His little sharp eyes flickered with sudden flights of anger.

"You're some liar, Mr. Nibley," he told himself. "You point at meteors, but who's to prove you right or wrong, right or wrong, eh? You sit up here and wait and wait and wait. Those machines down below spoil it. You never have a chance to prove your ability! No! The Captain won't use you! He won't need you! None of those men believe in you. Think you're a liar. Laugh at you. Yes, laugh. Yes, they call you an old, old liar!"

Nibley's thin nostrils quivered. His thin wrinkled face was crimsoned and wild. He staggered to his feet, got hold of his favorite monkey-wrench and waved it slowly back and forth.

. . .

For a moment his heart almost stopped in him. In panic he clutched at his chest, pushing, pulling, pumping at his heart to keep it running. The wine. The excitement. He dropped the wrench. "No, not yet!" he looked down at his chest, wildly tearing at it. "Not just yet, oh please!" he cried. "Not until I *show* them!"

His heart went on beating, drunkenly, slowly.

He bent, retrieved the wrench and laughed numbly. "I'll show 'em," he cried, weaving across the deck. "Show them how good I am. Eliminate competition! I'll run the ship myself!"

He climbed slowly down the rungs to destroy the machines.

It made a lot of noise.

Nibley heard a shout. "Get him!" His hand went down again, again. There was a scream of whistles, a jarring of flung metal, a minor explosion. His hand went down again, the wrench in it. He felt himself cursing and pounding away. Something shattered. Men ran toward him. *This* was the computator! He hit upon it once more. Yes! Then he was caught up like an empty sack, smashed in the face by someone's fist, thrown to the deck. "Cut acceleration!" a voice cried far away. The ship slowed. Somebody kicked Nibley in the face. Blackness. Dark. Around and around down into darkness . . .

When he opened his eyes again people were talking:

"We're turning back."

"The hell we are. Kroll says we'll go on, anyway."

"That's suicide! We can't hit that Asteroid Belt without radar."

Nibley looked up from the floor. Kroll was there, over him, looking down at the old man. "I might have known," he said, over and over again. He wavered in Nibley's sobering vision.

The ship hung motionless, silent.

Through the ports, Nibley saw they were based on the sunward side of a large planetoid, waiting, shielded from most of the asteroid particles.

"I'm sorry," said Nibley.

"He's sorry." Kroll swore. "The very man we bring along as relief computator sabotages our machine! Hell!"

Bruno was in the room. Nibley saw Bruno's eyes dilate at Kroll's exclamation. Bruno knew now.

Nibley tried to get up. "We'll get through the Swarm, anyway. I'll take you through. That's why I broke that blasted contraption. I don't like competition. I can clear a path through them asteroids big enough to lug Luna through on Track Five!"

"Who gave you the wine?"

"I found it, I just found it, that's all."

The crew hated him with their eyes. He felt their hatred like so many meteors coming in and striking at him. They hated his shriveled, wrinkled old man guts. They stood around and waited for Kroll to let them kick him apart with their boots.

Kroll walked around the old man in a circle. "You think I'd chance you getting us through the Belt!" He snorted. "What if we got half through and you got potted again!" He stopped, with his back to Nibley. He was thinking. He kept looking over his shoulder at the old man. "I can't trust you." He looked out the port at the stars, at where Jupiter shone in space. "And yet—" He looked at the men. "Do you want to turn back?"

Nobody moved. They didn't have to answer. They didn't want to go back. They wanted to go ahead.

"We'll keep on going, then," said Kroll.

Bruno spoke. "We crew-members should have some say. I say go back. We can't make it. We're just wasting our lives."

Kroll glanced at him, coolly. "You seem to be alone." He went back to the port. He rocked on his heels. "It was no accident Nibley got that wine. Somebody planted it, knowing Nibley's weakness. Somebody who was paid off by the Martian Industrials to keep this ship from going through. This was a clever set-up. The machines were smashed in such a way as to throw suspicion directly on an innocent, well, almost innocent, party. Nibley was just a tool. I'd like to know who handled that tool—"

Nibley got up, the wrench in his gnarled hand. "I'll tell you who planted that wine. I been thinking and now—"

Darkness. A short-circuit. Feet running on the metal deck. A shout. A thread of fire across the darkness. Then a whistling as something flew, hit. Someone grunted.

The lights came on again. Nibley was at the light control.

On the floor, gun in hand, eyes beginning to numb, lay Bruno. He lifted the gun, fired it. The bullet hit Nibley in the stomach.

Nibley grabbed at the pain. Kroll kicked at Bruno's head. Bruno's head snapped back. He lay quietly.

The blood pulsed out between Nibley's fingers. He watched it with interest, grinning with pain. "I knew his orbit," he whispered, sitting down cross-legged on the deck. "When the lights went out I chose my own orbit back to the light switch. I knew where Bruno'd be in the dark. Havin' a wrench handy I let fly, choosin' my arc, naturally. Guess he's got a hard skull, though . . ."

. . .

They carried Nibley to a bunk. Douglas stood over him, dimly, growing older every second. Nibley squinted up. All the men tightened in upon it. Nibley felt their dismay, their dread, their worry, their nervous anger.

Finally, Kroll exhaled. "Turn the ship around," he said. "Go back to Mars."

The crew stood with their limp hands at their sides. They were tired. They didn't want to live any more. They just stood with their feet on the deck. Then, one by one, they began to walk away like so many cold, dead men.

"Hold on," cried Nibley, weakening. "I ain't through yet. I got two orbits to fix. I got one to lay out for this ship to Jupiter. And I got to finish out my own separate secret personal orbit. You ain't turnin' back nowhere!"

Kroll grimaced. "Might as well realize it, Grandpa. It takes seven hours to get through the Swarms, and you haven't another *two* hours in you."

The old man laughed. "Think I don't know that? Hell! Who's supposed to know all these things, me or you?"

"You, Pop."

"Well, then, dammit—bring me a bulger!"

"Now, look—"

"You heard me, by God—a bulger!"

"Why?"

"You ever hear of a thing called triangulation? Well, maybe I won't live long enough to go with you, but, by all the sizes and shapes of behemoths—this ship is jumpin' through to Jupiter!"

Kroll looked at him. There was a breathing silence, a heart beating silence in the ship. Kroll sucked in his breath, hesitated, then smiled a grey smile.

"You heard him, Douglas. Get him a bulger."

"And get a stretcher! And tote this ninety pounds of bone out on the biggest asteroid around here! Got that?"

"You heard him, Haines! A stretcher! Stand by for maneuvering!" Kroll sat down by the old man. "What's it all about, Pop? You're—sober?"

"Clear as a bell!"

"What're you going to do?"

"Redeem myself of my sins, by George! Now get your ugly face away so I can think! And tell them bucks to hurry!"

Kroll bellowed and men rushed. They brought a space-suit, inserted the ninety pounds of shrill and wheeze and weakness into it—the doctor had finished with his probings and fixings—buckled, zipped and welded him into it. All the while they worked, Nibley talked.

"Remember when I was a kid. Stood up to that there plate poundin' out baseballs North, South and six ways from Sundays." He chuckled. "Used to hit 'em, and predict which window in what house they'd break!" Wheezy laughter. "One day I said to my Dad, 'Hey, Dad, a meteor just fell on Simpson's Garage over in Jonesville.' 'Jonesville is six miles from here,' said my father, shakin' his finger at me. 'You quit your lyin', Nibley boy, or I'll trot you to the woodshed!'"

"Save your strength," said Kroll.

"That's all right," said Nibley. "You know the funny thing was always that I lied like hell and everybody said I lied like hell, but come to find out, later, I wasn't lyin' at all, it was the truth. I just *sensed* things."

The ship maneuvered down on a windless, empty planetoid. Nibley was carried on a stretcher out onto alien rock.

"Lay me down right here. Prop up my head so I can see Jupiter and the whole damned Asteroid Belt. Be sure my headphones are tuned neat. There. Now, give me a piece of paper."

Nibley scribbled a long weak snake of writing on paper, folded it. "When Bruno comes to, give him this. Maybe he'll believe me when he reads it. Personal. Don't pry into it yourself."

The old man sank back, feeling pain drilling through his stomach, and a kind of sad happiness. Somebody was singing somewhere, he didn't know where. Maybe it was only the stars moving on the sky.

"Well," he said, clearly. "Guess this is it, children. Now get the hell aboard, leave me alone to think. This is going to be the biggest, hardest, damnedest job of computatin' I ever latched onto! There'll be orbits and cross orbits, big balls of fire and little bitty specules, and, by God, I'll chart 'em all! I'll chart a hundred thousand of the damned monsters and their offspring, you just wait and see! Get aboard! I'll tell you what to do from there on."

Douglas looked doubtful.

Nibley caught the look. "What ever happens," he cried. "Will be worth it, won't it? It's better than turnin' back to Mars, ain't it? Well, *ain't* it?"

"It's better," said Douglas. They shook hands.

"Now all of you, get!"

. . .

Nibley watched the ship fire away and his eyes saw it and the Asteroid Swarm and that brilliant point of light that was massive Jupiter. He could almost feel the hunger and want and waiting up there in that star flame.

He looked out into space and his eyes widened and space came in, opened out like a flower, and already, natural as water flowing, Nibley's mind, tired as it was, began to shiver out calculations. He started talking.

"Captain? Take the ship straight out now. You hear?"

"Fine," answered the Captain.

"Look at your dials."

"Looking."

"If number seven reads 132:87, okay. Keep 'er there. If she varies a point, counteract it on Dial Twenty to 56.90. Keep her hard over for seventy thousand miles, all that is clear so far. Then, after that, a sharp veer in number two direction, over a thousand miles. There's a big sweep of meteors coming in on that other path for you to dodge. Let me see, let me see—" He figured. "Keep your speed at a constant of one hundred thousand miles. At that rate—check your clocks and watches—in exactly an hour you'll hit the second part of the Big Belt. Then switch to a course roughly five thousand miles over to number 3 direction, veer again five minutes on the dot later and—"

"Can you see all those asteroids, Nibley. Are you sure?"

"Sure. Lots of 'em. Every single one going every which way! Keep straight ahead until two hours from now, after that last direction of mine—then slide off at an angle toward Jupiter, slow down to ninety thousand for ten minutes, then up to a hundred ten thousand for fifteen minutes. After that, one hundred fifty thousand all the way!"

Flame poured out of the rocket jets. It moved swiftly away, growing small and distant.

"Give me a read on dial 67!"

"Four."

"Make it six! And set your automatic pilot to 61 and 14 and 35. Now—everything's okay. Keep your chronometer reading this way—seven, nine, twelve. There'll be a few tight scrapes, but you'll hit Jupiter square on in 24 hours, if you jump your speed to 700,000 six hours from now and hold it that way."

"Square on it is, Mr. Nibley."

Nibley just lay there a moment. His voice was easy and not so high and shrill any more. "And on the way back to Mars, later, don't try to find me. I'm going out in the dark on this metal rock. Nothing but dark for me. Back to perihelion and sun for you. Know—know where *I'm* going?"

"Where?"

"Centaurus!" Nibley laughed. "So help me God I am. No lie!"

He watched the ship going out, then, and he felt the compact, collected trajectories of all the men in it. It was a good feeling to know that he was guiding them. Like in the old days . . .

Douglas' voice broke in again.

"Hey, Pop. Pop, you still there?"

A little silence. Nibley felt blood pulsing down inside his suit. "Yep," he said.

"We just gave Bruno your little note to read. Whatever it was, when he finished reading it, he went insane."

Nibley said, quiet-like. "Burn that there paper. Don't let anybody else read it."

A pause. *"It's burnt. What was it?"*

"Don't be inquisitive," snapped the old man. "Maybe I proved to Bruno that he didn't really exist. To hell with it!"

The rocket reached its constant speed. Douglas radioed back: "All's well. Sweet calculating, Pop. I'll tell the Rocket Officials back at Marsport. They'll be glad to know about you. Sweet, sweet calculating. Thanks. How goes it? I said—how goes it? Hey, Pop! Pop?"

Nibley raised a trembling hand and waved it at nothing. The ship was gone. He couldn't even see the jet-wash now, he could only feel that hard metal movement out there among the stars, going on and on through a course he had set for it. He couldn't speak. There was just emotion in him. He had finally, by God, heard a compliment from a mechanic of radar-computators!

He waved his hand at nothing. He watched nothing moving on and on into the crossed orbits of other invisible nothings. The silence was now complete.

He put his hand down. Now he had only to chart that one last personal orbit. The one he had wanted to finish only in space and not grounded back on Mars.

It didn't take lightening calculation to set it out for certain.

Life and death were the parabolic ends to his trajectory. The long life, first swinging in from darkness, arcing to the inevitable perihelion, and now moving back out, out and away—

Into the soft, encompassing dark.

"By God," he thought weakly, quietly. "Right up to the last, my reputation's good. Never fluked a calculation yet, and I never will . . ."

He didn't.

NINE

THE EMISSARY

He knew it was autumn again, because Torry came romping into the house bringing the windy crisp cold smell of autumn with him. In every black curl of his dog-hair he carried autumn. Leaf flakes tangled in his dark ears and muzzle, dropping from his white vest, and off his flourished tail. The dog smelled just like autumn.

Martin Christie sat up in bed and reached down with one pale small hand. Torry barked and displayed a generous length of pink, rippling tongue, which he passed over and along the back of Martin's hand. Torry licked him like a lollypop. "Because of the salt," declared Martin, as Torry leaped upon the bed.

"Get down," warned Martin. "Mom doesn't like you up here." Torry flattened his ears. "Well . . ." Martin relented. "Just for a while, then."

Torry warmed Martin's thin body with his dog warmness. Martin relished the clean dog smell and the litter of fallen leaves on the quilt. He didn't care if Mom scolded. After all, Torry was new-born. Right out of the stomach of autumn Torry came, reborn in the firm sharp cold.

"What's it like outside, Torry? Tell me."

Lying there, Torry would tell him. Lying there, Martin would know what autumn was like; like in the old days before sickness had put him to bed. His only contact with autumn now was this brief chill, this leaf-flaked fur; the compact canine representation of summer gone—this autumn-by-proxy.

"Where'd you go today, Torry?"

But Torry didn't have to tell him. He knew. Over a fall-burdened hill, leaving a pad-pattern in the brilliantly piled leaves, down to where the kids ran shouting on bikes and roller skates and wagons at Barstow's Park, that's where Torry ran, barking out his canine delight. And down into the town where rain had fallen dark, earlier; and mud furrowed under car wheels, down between the feet of week-end shoppers. That's where Torry went.

And wherever Torry went, then Martin could go; because Torry would always tell him by the touch, feel, consistency, the wet, dry, or crispness of his coat. And, lying there holding Torry, Martin would send his mind out to retrace each step of Torry's way through fields, over the shallow glitter of the ravine

creek, darting across the marbled spread of the graveyard, into the wood, over the meadows; where all the wild, laughing autumn sports went on, Martin could go now through his emissary.

Mother's voice sounded downstairs, angrily.

Her short angry walking came up the hall steps.

Martin pushed. "Down, Torry!"

Torry vanished under the bed just before the bedroom door opened and Mom looked in, blue eyes snapping. She carried a tray of salad and fruit juices, firmly.

"Is Torry here?" she demanded.

Torry gave himself away with a few rumps of his tail against the floor.

Mom set the tray down impatiently. "That dog is more trouble. Always upsetting things and digging places. He was in Miss Tarkins's garden this morning, and dug a big hole. Miss Tarkins is mad."

"Oh." Martin held his breath. There was silence under the bed. Torry knew when to keep quiet.

"And it's not the only time," said Mom. "This is the third hole he's dug this week!"

"Maybe he's looking for something."

"Something fiddlesticks! He's just a curious nuisance. He can't keep that black nose out of anything. *Always* curious!"

There was a hairy pizzicato of tail under the bed. Mom couldn't help smiling.

"Well," she ended, "if he doesn't stop digging in yards, I'll have to keep him in and not let him run."

Martin opened his mouth wide. "Oh, no, Mom! Don't do that! Then I wouldn't know—anything. He *tells* me."

Mom's voice softened. "Does he, son?"

"Sure. He goes around and comes back and tells what happens, tells everything!"

Mom's hand was spun glass touching his head. "I'm glad he tells you. I'm glad you've got him."

They both sat a moment, considering how worthless the last year would've been without Torry. Only two more months, thought Martin, of being in bed, like the doctor said, and he'd be up and around.

"Here, Torry!"

Jangling, Martin locked the special collar attachment around Torry's neck. It was a note, painted on a tin square:

"MY NAME IS TORRY. WILL YOU VISIT MY MASTER, WHO IS SICK? FOLLOW ME!"

It worked. Torry carried it out into the world every day.

"Will you let him out, Mom?"

"Yes, if he's good and stops his digging!"

"He'll stop; won't you, Torry?"

The dog barked.

. . .

You could hear the dog yipping far down the street and away, going to fetch visitors. Martin was feverish and his eyes stood out in his head as he sat, propped up, listening, sending his mind rushing along with the dog, faster, faster. Yesterday Torry had brought Mrs. Holloway from Elm Avenue, with a story book for a present; the day before Torry had sat up, begged at Mr. Jacobs, the jeweler. Mr. Jacobs had bent and near-sightedly deciphered the tag message and, sure enough, had come shuffling and waddling to pay Martin a little how-do-you-do.

Now, Martin heard the dog returning through the smoky afternoon, barking, running, barking again.

Footsteps came lightly after the dog. Somebody rang the downstairs bell, softly. Mom answered the door. Voices talked.

Torry raced upstairs, leaped on the bed. Martin leaned forward excitedly, his face shining, to see who'd come upstairs this time. Maybe Miss Palmborg or Mr. Ellis or Miss Jendriss, or—

The visitor walked upstairs, talking to Mom. It was a young woman's voice, talking with a laugh in it. Miss Haight!

The door opened.

Martin had company.

. . .

Four days passed in which Torry did his job, reported morning, afternoon and evening temperatures, soil consistencies, leaf colors, rain levels, and, most important of all, brought visitors.

Miss Haight, again, on Saturday. She was the young, laughing, handsome woman with the gleaming brown hair and the soft way of walking. She lived in the big house on Park Street. It was her third visit in a month.

On Sunday it was Reverend Vollmar, on Monday Miss Clark and Mr. Hendricks.

And to each of them Martin explained his dog. How in spring he was odorous of wild-flowers and fresh earth; in summer he was baked, warm, sun-crisp; in autumn, now, a treasure trove of gold leaves hidden in his pelt for Martin to explore out. Torry demonstrated this process for the visitors, lying over on his back, waiting to be explored.

Then, one morning, Mom told Martin about Miss Haight, the one who was so handsome and young and laughed.

She was dead.

Killed in an auto accident in Glen Falls.

Martin held onto his dog, remembering Miss Haight, thinking of the way she smiled, thinking of her bright eyes, her closely cropped chestnut hair, her slim body, her quick walk, her nice stories about seasons and people.

So now she was dead. She wasn't going to laugh or tell stories any more. That's all there was to it. She was dead.

"What do they do in the graveyard, Mom, under the ground?"

"Nothing."

"You mean they just lay there?"

"Lie there," corrected Mom.

"*Lie* there . . .?"

"Yes," said Mom, "that's all they do."

"It doesn't sound like much fun."

"It's not supposed to be."

"Why don't they get up and walk around once in awhile if they get tired of lying there?"

"I think you've said enough, now," said Mom.

"I just wanted to know."

"Well, now you know."

"Sometimes I think God's pretty silly."

"Martin!"

Martin scowled. "You'd think He'd treat people better than throw dirt in their faces and tell them to lay still for keeps. You'd think He'd find a better way. What if I told Torry to play dead-dog? He does it awhile, but then he gets sick of it and wags his tail or blinks his eyes, or pants, or jumps off the bed, and walks around. I bet those graveyard people do the same, huh, Torry?"

Torry barked.

"That will *do*!" said Mom, firmly. "I don't like such talk!"

. . .

The autumn continued. Torry ran across forests, over the creek, prowling through the graveyard as was his custom, and into town and around and back, missing nothing.

In mid-October, Torry began to act strangely. He couldn't seem to find anybody to come visit Martin. Nobody seemed to pay attention to his begging. He came home seven days in a row without bringing a visitor. Martin was deeply despondent over it.

Mom explained it. "Everybody's busy. The war, and all. People have lots to worry over besides little begging dogs."

"Yeah," said Martin, "I guess so."

But there was more than that to it. Torry had a funny gleam in his eyes. As if

he wasn't really trying, or didn't care, or—something. Something Martin couldn't figure out. Maybe Torry was sick. Well, to heck with visitors. As long as he had Torry, everything was fine.

And then one day Torry ran out and didn't come back at all.

Martin waited quietly at first. Then—nervously. Then—anxiously.

At supper time he heard Mom and Dad call Torry. Nothing happened. It was no use. There was no sound of paws along the path outside the house. No sharp barking in the cold night air. Nothing. Torry was gone. Torry wasn't coming home—ever.

Leaves fell past the window. Martin sank on his pillow, slowly, a pain deep and hard in his chest.

The world was dead. There was no autumn because there was no fur to bring it into the house. There would be no winter because there would be no paws to dampen the quilt with snow. No more seasons. No more time. The go-between, the emissary, had been lost in the wild thronging of civilization, probably hit by a car, or poisoned, or stolen, and there was no time.

Sobbing, Martin turned his face to his pillow. There was no contact with the world. The world was dead.

. . .

Martin twisted in bed and in three days the Hallowe'en pumpkins were rotting in trash cans, masks were burnt in incinerators, the bogeys were stacked away on shelves until next year. Hallowe'en was withdrawn, impersonal, untouchable. It had simply been one evening when he had heard horns blowing off in the cold autumn stars, people yelling and thumping windows and porches with soap and cabbages. That was all.

Martin stared at the ceiling for the first three days of November, watching alternate light and dark shift across it. Days got shorter, darker, he could tell by the window. The trees were naked. The autumn wind changed its tempo and temperature. But it was just a pageant outside his window, nothing more. He couldn't get at it.

Martin read books about the seasons and the people in that world that was now non-existent. He listened each day, but didn't hear the sounds he wanted to hear.

Friday night came. His parents were going to the theatre. They'd be back at eleven. Miss Tarkins, from next door, would come over for awhile until Martin got sleepy, and then she would go home.

Mom and Dad kissed him goodnight and walked out of the house into the autumn. He heard their footsteps go down the street.

Miss Tarkins came over, stayed awhile and then when Martin confessed to being tired, she turned out all the lights and went back home.

Silence, then. Martin just lay there and watched the stars moving slowly across the sky. It was a clear, moonlit evening. The kind when he and Torry had once run together across the town, across the sleeping graveyard, across the ravine, through the meadows, down the shadowed streets, chasing phantasmal childish dreams.

Only the wind was friendly. Stars don't bark. Trees don't sit up and beg. The wind, of course, did wag its tail against the house a number of times, startling Martin.

Now it was after nine o'clock.

If only Torry would come home, bringing some of the world with him. A burr or a rimed thistle, or the wind in his ears. If only Torry would come home.

And then, way off somewhere, there was a sound.

Martin arose in his covers, trembling. Starlight was reflected in his small eyes. He threw back the covers and tensed, listening.

There, again, was the sound.

It was so small it was like a needle-point moving through the air miles and miles away.

It was the dreamy echo of a dog—barking.

It was the sound of a dog coming across meadows and fields, down dark streets, the sound of a dog running and letting his breath out to the night. The sound of a dog circling and running. It came and went, it lifted and faded, it came forward and went back, as if it was being led by someone on a chain. As if the dog was running and somebody whistled under the chestnut trees and the dog ran back, circled, and darted again for home.

Martin felt the room revolve under him, and the bed tremble with his body. The springs complained with metal, tining voices.

The faint barking continued for five minutes, growing louder and louder.

Torry, come home! Torry, come home! Torry, boy, oh Torry, where've you been? Oh, Torry, Torry!

Another five minutes. Nearer and nearer, and Martin kept saying the dog's name over and over again. Bad dog, wicked dog, to go off and leave him for all these days. Bad dog, good dog, come home, oh, Torry, hurry home and tell me about the world! Tears fell and dissolved into the quilt.

Nearer now. Very near. Just up the street, barking. Torry!

Martin held his breath. The sound of dog feet in the piled dry leaves, down the path. And now—right outside the house, barking, barking, barking! Torry!

Barking to the door.

Martin shivered. Did he dare run down and let the dog in, or should he wait for Mom and Dad to come home? Wait. Yes, he must wait. But it would be unbearable if, while he waited, the dog ran away again. No, he would go down and

release the lock and his own special dog would leap into his arms again. Good Torry!

He started to move from bed when he heard the other sound. The door opened downstairs. Somebody was kind enough to have opened the door for Torry.

Torry had brought a visitor, of course. Mr. Buchanan, or Mr. Jacobs, or perhaps Miss Tarkins.

The door opened and closed and Torry came racing upstairs and flung himself, yipping, on the bed.

"Torry, where've you been, what've you done all this week?"

Martin laughed and cried all in one. He grabbed the dog and held him. Then he stopped laughing and crying, suddenly. He just stared at Torry with wide, strange eyes.

The odor arising from Torry was—different.

It was a smell of earth. Dead earth. Earth that had lain cheek by jowl with unhealthy decaying things six feet under. Stinking, rancid earth. Clods of decaying soil fell off Torry's paws. And—something else—a small withered fragment of—*skin*?

Was it? Was it! WAS IT!

What kind of message was this from Torry? What did such a message mean? The stench—the ripe and awful cemetery earth.

Torry was a bad dog. Always digging where he shouldn't dig. Torry was a *good* dog. Always making friends so easily. Torry took to liking everybody. He brought them home with him.

And now this latest visitor was coming up the stairs. Slowly. Dragging one foot after the other, painfully, slowly, slowly, slowly.

"Torry, Torry—where've you *been*!" screamed Martin.

A clod of rank crawling soil dropped from the dog's chest.

The door to the bedroom moved inward.

Martin had company.

TEN

AND WATCH THE FOUNTAINS

Morgan and Thompson hated each other's guts. They competed with each other, stole business from one another. Morgan, say, invented a can opener; then Thompson perfected a new hexagonal can that made the can opener obsolete. On the other hand, Thompson invented a rocket powder; and Morgan toddled out with his antigravity ship that needed little propulsion except hot air—for which an ample supply of lecturing scientists were already installed. So the competition waxed and waned.

One morning Dr. Morgan, the younger of the two, telephoned Thompson in high spirits. "Hello, hello," he cried. "Meet me at the Rocket Café at noon. I have something to tell you. Yes, sir!"

Old Doc Thompson seemed in rare spirits, too. He accepted. They met.

"My dear Thompson!"

"My dear Morgan!" They slapped each other on the back, beaming.

"You seem happy today, Morgan?"

"Very, very happy. I've just completed an incredible invention."

Thompson smiled. "Ah? How nice. I hate to take the edge off your work, young man, but I have ALSO just completed an apparatus."

"It can't be half as good as mine," said Morgan, irritated.

"Twice as good," said Thompson, eating his salad voraciously.

Morgan eyed the old man wickedly. "If you only knew. I really shouldn't tell you this, but it is too good to keep, you old fool! I have built a *time machine!*"

Thompson choked on his salad. His face reddened. After a few moments of swallowing, during which Morgan laughed happily, Thompson glared at his opponent. "That's nothing," he cried, "you should know what *I* am at work on!"

"What is it?" asked Morgan, his eyes hardening.

Thompson shrugged. "It's a secret. Tell you later on, my son."

"Tonight," announced Morgan, "I shall go into the future!"

Thompson looked bored. "I will be ready to experiment with my invention in a few days. It's really very good."

Morgan pounded the table angrily. "Bah to *your* invention! You'll never have a chance to profit by it!"

Thompson lifted his white brows. "What do you mean by that?"

Morgan smiled cockily. "I am going into the future a couple of days and stab you in the back, you foul old buzzard!"

Thompson said, "Are you serious?"

"Yes, I am. You've irritated me for twenty years. Now I have decided to kill you."

"I shall accept my fate," said Thompson, dreamily, "with quiet philosophy."

Morgan showed his disappointment. "Aren't you worried? Aren't you going to have hysterics and plead with me on your knees?"

Thompson put a piece of meat in his mouth and chewed it, musingly, "I just had my pants pressed."

"Just for that," cried Morgan, "I shall stab you five times and watch the fountains!" With that, he raged out of the café, swearing.

Thompson sat there, scowling introspectively, chewing the thoughts of a tired old man. "That young fool," he said.

The sun came up and went down four times. Thompson assembled a mass of machinery and did things to it, pulled it apart again, and left it scattered around his laboratory where Morgan would see it.

Very late on Wednesday evening, Thompson felt someone breathing down his neck. That, and a faint odor of ozone and lilac told him that Morgan had arrived just behind him in his time machine.

"Oh, there you are!" said Thompson, turning around, hands empty.

"And there YOU are!" cried Morgan, plunging a knife into Thompson five times. Thompson collapsed, laughing, while his blood crimsoned the floor. "You're dying!" said Morgan. "Why do you laugh?"

Thompson pointed with weak fingers at the apparatus scattered about his laboratory. "You clever, clever boy. You thought you had a perfect crime, did you not?" he wheezed.

Morgan sneered. "Quite perfect!"

Thompson gasped with pain. "But *I* shall have the last laugh. You see . . . my invention . . . *it* was a time machine, too!"

"What!"

"Yes, and when you told me you'd kill me, *I* took a trip into the future . . . and you know what I did? Ha! I strangled you with copper wire and dropped your carcass into a vat of high-powered acid! Isn't that funny? Isn't that rich? Ha, ha!"

Morgan paled, grabbed the old man by the shoulders. "Don't die yet! Hold on! When . . . when in the future did you do this? WHEN?"

Thompson gargled faintly. "You want to know what day in the future I killed you, so you can be out of town that day? Oh, no. I won't tell. It . . . it may be one day, it may be one month, it may be one year, it may be ten years. But I'll show up and kill you when you won't be expecting it! Ha, ha!"

"Thompson! Thompson!" screamed Morgan, shaking the old man. But the shaking only hastened Thompson's death. He choked and passed away, still laughing.

And Morgan went back home in his time machine, wondering, watching waiting. And in the following months he kept jerking, getting more and more nervous. He glanced over his shoulder at the slightest noise. His appetite, usually prodigious, vanished. He wept on his pillow all night. He smoked cigarettes incessantly. He tried reading long books, but couldn't get interested in them. He couldn't sleep. He lay awake until the dawn watching the shifting shadows in his room.

And this nervous, twitching, watching, wondering, waiting went on for forty long years.

Thompson never showed up.

And Morgan, lying wrinkled on his deathbed, realized with horrified, angered, stifled irony JUST HOW BIG A LIAR THOMPSON WAS!!!

ELEVEN

THE MILLION YEAR PICNIC

Somehow the idea was brought up by Mom that perhaps the whole family would enjoy a fishing trip. But they weren't Mom's words; Timothy knew that. They were Dad's words, and Mom used them for him, somehow.

Dad shuffled his feet in a clutter of Martian pebbles, and agreed. So immediately there was a tumult and a shouting, and quick as jets the camp was tucked into capsules and containers, Mom slipped into traveling jumpers and blouse, Dad stuffed his pipe full with trembling hands, his eyes on the Martian sky, and the three boys piled yelling into the motorboat, none of them really keeping an eye on Mom and Dad, except Timothy.

Dad pushed a stud, the water-boat sent a humming sound up into the sky, the water shook back and the boat nosed ahead, and the family cried, "Hurrah!"

Timothy sat in the back of the boat with Dad, his small fingers on top of Dad's large hairy ones, watching the canal twist, leaving the crumbled place behind where they had landed their small tourist rocket.

Dad had a funny look in his eyes as the boat went up-canal. A look that Timothy couldn't figure. It was made of strong light and maybe a lot of joy. It made the deep wrinkles laugh instead of worry or cry.

So there went the tourist rocket, around a bend, gone.

"How far are we going?" Robert splashed his hand. It looked like a small crab jumping in the violet water.

Dad exhaled. "A million years."

"Gee," said Robert.

"Yeah," said Michael.

"Look, kids." Mother pointed one soft long arm. "There's a dead city."

They looked with fervent anticipation, and the dead city lay dead for them and them alone, drowsing in a hot silence of summer made on Mars by a Martian weatherman.

And Dad looked as if he was pleased that it was dead.

It was a futile spread of pink rocks sleeping on a rise of sand, stretching lazy crumbled arms out three miles, petering finally into a dribble of collapsed pillars, a few tumbled wharves, one lonely shrine with images stolen from it, and

then the sweep of sand again. Nothing else for miles. A white desert around the canal, and a blue desert over it, with a sun drifting on the blue one.

Just then, a rocket went up. Like a stone thrown across a blue pond, hitting with a scar of flame, falling deep, deeper, and vanishing.

Dad got a scared look in his eyes when he saw it, and added speed to the boat, gritting his teeth.

That was the last Earth rocket for one hundred days.

Looking up at the sky that was an ocean. You couldn't see a trace of war. Couldn't see men fighting and slaughtering each other like hung pig carcasses, gushing hot, salt blood.

Space dimensions narrowed that all down to one specule of matter, a dot against the cosmos labeled Earth. As removed and far off as two flies battling to the death in the arch of a great high and silent cathedral. And just as senseless.

William Thomas wiped his forehead, and felt the touch of his son's hand on his arm, like a young tarantula, thrilled. He beamed at his son. "How goes it, Timmy?"

"Fine, Dad."

Timothy hadn't quite figured out what was ticking inside the vast adult mechanism beside him. The man with the immense hawk nose, sun-burnt, peeling—and the hot blue eyes like agate marbles you play with after school in summer back on Earth, and the long thick columnar legs in the loose riding breeches.

"What are you looking at so hard, Dad?"

"I was looking for Earthian logic, common sense, good government, peace and responsibility."

"All that up there?"

"No. I didn't find it. It's not there any more. Maybe it'll never be there again. Maybe we fooled ourselves that it was ever there."

"Huh?"

"See the fish," said Dad, pointing.

. . .

There rose a soprano clamor from all three boys as they rocked the boat in arching their tender necks to see. They *oohed* and *ahhed*. A silver ring-fish floated by them, undulating, and closing like an iris, instantly, around food particles, to assimilate them.

Dad looked at it. His voice was deep and quiet.

"Just like war. War swims along, sees food, contracts. A moment later—Earth is gone."

"William," said Mother.

"Oh, I'm sorry," said Dad.

Another ring-fish came by, drawing more noise from them, and more pointing. And then they sat still and felt the canal water rush cool under them, swift and glassy. The only sound was the motor-hum, the rush of the water, and the sun heating the air—which wasn't much. Once in a great while a bird would come singing and go singing and drop from hearing and sight.

On both sides of the canal now they saw the great oxygen vines and bushes, planted in irregular diagrams upon sand; plants with deep reaching roots thrusting miles after the wither water-gut of the planet; sowed by far-seeing scientists of Earth fifty years before, and only now profuse enough, active enough to give Mars a thin atmospheric shell.

Dad looked at them and shook his head. He caught himself when he saw Mom staring at him, and this was another symbol that Timothy couldn't fathom.

"When do we see the Martians?" cried Michael, who was ten years old and decorated conspicuously with the medals of Mendelian skin-coloration—freckles. "When do we see the Martians?"

"Quite soon, perhaps," said Father. "Maybe this afternoon. Maybe tonight."

"How do you mean?" asked Mom. "The Martians are a dead race."

"Oh, no, they're not. I'll show you some Martians, all right," William Thomas said, presently.

Timothy scowled at that, but said nothing. There was no questioning the alien thought patterns of grownups. And he had found it far happier circumstance to place his questions only intermittently, and then when he was certain his parents would humor them.

The other boys were already engaged making shelves of their small hands and peering under them toward the seven foot stone banks of the canal, watching for Martians.

"What do they look like?" demanded Michael.

"You'll know them when you see them." Dad sort of laughed, and Timothy saw a pulse beating time in his cheek.

Mother was slender and soft, with a woven plait of spun gold hair over her head in a tiara, and eyes the color of the deep cool canal water where it ran in shadow, almost purple, with flecks of amber caught in it. You could see her thoughts swimming around in her eyes, like fish—some bright, some dark, some fast, quick, some slow and easy, and sometimes, like when she looked up where Earth was, being nothing but color and nothing else.

She sat in the boat's prow, one hand resting on the side-lip, the other on the lap of her dark blue breeches, and a line of sunburnt soft neck showing where her blouse opened like a white flower.

She kept looking ahead to see what was there, and not being able to see it clearly enough, she looked backward toward her husband, and through his eyes,

reflected then, she saw what was ahead; and since he added part of himself to this reflection, a determined firmness, her face relaxed and she accepted it, and she turned back knowing, suddenly, what to look for.

Timothy looked, too. But all he saw was a straight pencil line of canal going violet through a wide shallow valley penned by low, eroded hills, and on until it fell over the sky's edge. And this canal went on and on, through cities that would have rattled like beetles in a dry skull if you shook them. A hundred or two hundred cities dreaming hot summer day dreams and cool summer night dreams . . .

. . .

They were going far on this outing—to fish. But there was a gun in the boat. This was a vacation. But why all the food, more than enough to last them years and years, left hidden back there near the rocket? Vacation. But just behind the veil of the vacation was not a soft face of laughter, but something hard and bony and perhaps terrifying. Timothy could not lift the veil, and the two other boys were busy being ten years old and eight years old, respectively.

"No Martians yet. Nuts." declared Robert, seriously miffed. He put his v-shaped chin on his hands and glared at the canal.

Dad had brought an atomic-radio along, strapped to his wrist. It functioned on an old-fashioned principle; you held it against the bones near your ear, and it vibrated singing or talking to you. Dad listened to it now. His face looked like one of those fallen Martian cities, caved in, sucked dry, almost dead.

Then he gave it to Mom to listen. Her lips dropped open.

"What . . .?" Timothy started to question, but withdrew tactfully, to watch.

Glancing hastily upward, Dad notched the boat speed higher, immediately. The boat leaped and jounced and spanked. This shook Robert out of his funk, and elicited yelps of frightened but ecstatic joy from Michael, who clung to Mom's legs and watched the water pour by his nose in a wet torrent. . . .

Dad must have seen something, because he cut speed, swerved the boat, curved and ducked it into a little branch canal and under an ancient crumbling stone wharf dwelling that smelled like crab flesh.

Air-brakes stopped the boat, and Dad twisted to see if the ripples on the canal were enough to map their route into hiding. Water lines went across, lapped the stones, and came back to meet each other, settling to be dappled by the sun. It all went away.

Dad listened. So did everybody.

High in the sky there was a sound like a metal spider spinning a web of noise over and across, down and around, over and across; a swift weaving over the whole land again and again. The spider was a rocket, and the web was flame and noise from its jets.

Dad's breathing echoed like fists beating against the cold wet wharf stones. In the shadow, Mom's cat-eyes just watched Father for some clue to—what next?

The sky spider stopped spinning its web and went away. Father sank back, sighing, and Timothy put out his hand and patted the dark hair on his arm.

A moment later there were two titanic, marrow-jolting explosions that grew upon themselves. Followed by half a dozen others.

"The ship," said Dad. "They found the rocket."

Michael said, "What happened, Dad, what happened?"

"Oh, they just blew up our rocket, that's all," said Timothy, trying to sound matter-of-fact. "I've heard rockets blown up before. Ours just blew. Not only ours, but four others."

Timothy thought about it and added, "There were only four others on Mars. Down by the Science Colony where those one hundred men lived."

"Why did they do that?" asked Michael. "Huh, Dad?"

Dad still listened, the audio to his ear, blinking wet eyes. After two minutes he dropped his hand like you would drop a rag.

"It's all over," he said to Mom. "The radio just went off the atomic beam. Every other world station's gone. The air is completely silent. It'll probably remain silent."

"For how long?" asked Robert.

"Maybe—your great-grandchildren will hear it again," said Dad. He just sat there, and the kids were caught in the center of his awe and defeat and resignation and acceptance.

Finally, he put the boat out into the canal again and they continued in the direction in which they had originally started.

It was beginning to get late. Already the sun was down the sky, and a series of dead cities was ahead of them.

Dad talked very quietly and gently to the kids. Many times in the past he had been brief, distant, removed from them, but now he patted them on the head with just a word and they felt it.

"Mike, pick a city."

"What, Dad?"

"Pick a city, son. Any one of these cities we pass by."

"All right," said Michael. "How do I pick?"

"Pick the one you like the most. You, too, Robert, and Tim. Pick the city you like the most."

"I want a city with Martians in it," said Michael.

"You'll have that. I promise," said Dad. His lips were for the kids, but his eyes were for Mom.

They passed six cities in twenty minutes. Dad didn't say anything more about the explosions, he seemed much more interested in having fun with the kids, keeping them happy, than anything else.

. . .

Michael liked the first city they passed, but this was vetoed because everyone doubted quick, first judgments. The second city nobody liked. Timothy liked the third because it was fairly large. The fourth and fifth were too small, and the sixth brought acclaim from everyone, including Mother, who joined in the *Gees, Goshes* and *Look-At-Thats.*

There were fifty or sixty huge structures still standing; streets were dusty, but paved, and you could see one or two old centrifugal fountains still pulsing wetly in the plazas. That was the only life—water leaping in the settling sun.

"This is the city," said Timothy.

"Yes, this is it," agreed Dad. "Yes, Alice?"

Mom nodded swiftly, her face an exact replica of Dad's expression.

Steering the boat to a landing flat, Dad jumped out.

"Here we are kids. This is ours. This is where we live from now on."

"From now on?" Michael was incredulous. He stood up, looking, and then turned to stare back at where the rocket used to be. "What about the rocket, what about New York City?"

"Here," said Dad.

He placed the wrist audio against Michael's blond, pear-shaped skull. "Listen."

Michael listened.

"Nothing," he said.

"That's right. Nothing. Nothing at all any more. No more New York, no more Earth, no more Rocket."

Michael considered the lethal revelation and began to sob little dry sobs, unoiled as yet by tears.

"Wait a moment," said Dad, the next instant. "I'm giving you a whole lot more in exchange, Mike!"

"What?" Michael held off the tears, curious, but quite ready to continue in case Dad's further revelation was as disconcerting as the original.

"I'm giving you this city, Mike. It's yours."

"M-mine. . ."

"For you and Robert and Timothy, all three of you, to own for yourselves."

Timothy bounded out of the boat. "Look, guys, all for us; all of *THAT!*" He was playing the game with Dad, playing it good and big, and without a tear. Later, after it was all over and things had settled, he could go off by himself and cry for ten minutes. But now it was still a game, still a family outing, and the other kids must be kept playing.

Mike jumped out, with Robert. They helped Mom out.

"Be careful of your sister," said Dad, and nobody knew what he meant until later.

They hurried into the great, pink-stoned city, whispering among themselves, because dead cities have a way of making you want to whisper, to watch the sun go down.

"In about five days," Dad said, quietly, "I'll go back down to where our rocket was and collect the food hidden in the ruins there, and bring it up; and I'll hunt for Ralph Edwards and his daughters and his wife there."

"Daughters?" asked Timothy. "How many?"

"Four," said Dad.

"I can see that'll cause trouble later," said Mother, cryptically.

"Girls," Michael made a face like an old Mars stone image. "Girls. *Gahh!*"

"Is this really ours, Dad?"

"The whole planet belongs to us, kids. The whole darn planet."

They stood there, King of the Hill, Top of the Heap, Ruler of All They Surveyed, Unimpeachable Monarchs and Presidents, trying to understand what it meant to own a world, and how big a world really was.

Night came quickly in the thin atmosphere, and Dad left them in the square by the pulsing fountain, went down to the boat, came walking back carrying a pile of papers in his big hands.

He laid the papers in a clutter in the old courtyard and set them afire. To keep warm, they crouched around them and laughed, and Timothy saw the little letters leap like frightened animals when the flames touched and engulfed them. The papers crinkled like an old man's skin and the cremation surrounded words like this:

"Government Bonds, Political Maps, Religious Quarrels, Beliefs, Sciences, Prejudices of the Pan-American Unity, Stock Report for July 23, 2044, THE WAR DIGEST . . ."

Dad had insisted on bringing these papers, for this purpose. He sat there and fed them into the fire, one by one, with satisfaction, and told them what it all meant.

. . .

"I'm burning a way of life, just like that way of life is being burned clean on Earth right now. Forgive me if I talk like a politician. I am, after all, a former governor of a state, and I was honest and they hated me for it. Life on Earth never oriented itself! It never seemed to have time to settle down or get anywhere good. Science got too far ahead of them too quickly, and the people got lost in a scientific wilderness, like children making over pretty things, gadgets, helicopters and rockets; putting emphasis on wrong things; on machines instead of the thought of how to run the machines. Wars got worse and killed them. That's what the silent radio means. That's what we ran away from.

"Mars is ripe for colonization. Scientists have worked for half a century to

prepare it for colonies. But there were too few rockets. I was state-governor. I had pull. I arranged it so your mother and I could bring you kids here as the first colonial family. I knew the war was coming, that the scientists would be called back from Mars to help. We were supposed to go back, too. We didn't. We took a fishing trip. Well, I hoped it wouldn't be this bad. I didn't want to tell you kids unless I had to. But Earth is gone. Interplanetary travel won't be back for another two hundred years, maybe longer, maybe never. But that way of life proved itself wrong, and it strangled itself with its own hands. You're young. I'll tell you this again every day until it sinks in."

Dad paused to feed more papers into the fire.

"Now, we are alone. We and a handful of others who are to meet us in a few days. *If* they lived. A few of them, I'm sure, will come up the canal. Enough to start over. Enough to begin. Enough to turn their backs on chaos and strike out on a new line . . ."

The fire leaped up to emphasize his talking. He was full of that fire. And then all the papers were gone, except one. That was a symbol, too. All the laws and beliefs of Earth were burnt into small hot ashes which soon would be carried off in a wind.

Timothy looked at the last thing that Dad tossed in the fire. It was a map of the United States, and it wrinkled and distorted itself hotly and went—*flimpf*—and was gone like a warm, black butterfly. Timothy had to turn his head away and swallow, hard.

"Now, I'm going to show you the Martians," said Dad. He got up. "Come along, all of you. Here, Alice." He took her hand.

Michael was crying loudly, and Dad picked him up and carried him, and they walked down through the ruins toward the canal.

The canal. Where tomorrow or the next day their future wives would come up in a boat—small laughing girls now, with their father and mother.

The night came down around them, and there were stars. But Timothy couldn't find Earth. It had already set. That was something to think about. *It was already set.*

A cool night wind blew around them, and as they walked, Dad said, "Your mother and I will try to teach you. We both have degrees in psychology. Perhaps we'll fail. I think not. We've had experience. We've seen. We planned this trip years ago, even before you were born. Even if there hadn't been a war, we would have come to Mars to live and form our own standard of living. It would have been another hundred years before Mars would have been even faintly poisoned by Earth civilization. Now, of course—"

They reached the canal. It was long and straight and cool and wet and reflective in the night.

"I've always wanted to see a Martian," said Michael, stiltedly. "Where are they, Dad? You promised."

"There they are, Mike," said Dad, and he shifted Michael on his shoulder and pointed straight down.

The Martians were there, all right. It sent a thrill chasing through Timothy.

The Martians were there—in the canal—reflected in the water. Timothy and Michael and Robert and Mom and Dad.

The Martians stared back up at them for a long, long silent time from the rippling water . . . .

TWELVE

THE MAN UPSTAIRS

He remembered how carefully and expertly Grandmother would fondle the cold cut guts of the chicken and withdraw the marvels therein; the wet shining loops of meat-smelling intestine, the muscled lump of heart, the gizzard with the collection of seeds in it. How neatly and nicely Grandma would slit the chicken's breast and push her fat little hand in to deprive it of its medals. These would be segregated, some in pans of water, others in squares of paper to be thrown to the dog later, perhaps. And then the ritual of taxidermy, stuffing the bird with watered, seasoned bread, and performing surgery with a swift bright needle, stitch after pulled tight stitch.

But for all the miracle of surgery, the bird would never survive the operation. It was only transported immediately into a hell and poked and basted and cooked until such time as the other surgeons gathered at the festive board and took up their scalpels to attack.

That was one of the prime thrills of Douglas's eleven year old life-span.

The knife collection, itself, was intriguing.

It lay abed in the various squeaking drawers of the large wooden kitchen table. It was a magic table, from which Grandmama, admittedly a rather kindly, gentle-faced and white-haired old witch, would draw paraphernalia for her miracles. The knives seemed to be most important in the dissection and investigation of turkeys and other like fowl.

Altogether, moving his small lips, Douglas counted twenty knives of varying shapes and sizes. But each was unfailingly polished into a sharp mirror in which Douglas could find his red hair and freckles on his button nose distorted brilliantly.

It was best to be quiet while Grandmama worked over her split animals. You could stand across the table from her, with your nose tucked over the edge, watching, but any loose boy talk might interfere with the spell. It was a wonder watching Grandmama brandish silver shakers over the bird, supposedly sprinkling showers of mummy-dust and ground Indian-bones, muttering her mystical verses under her toothless breath.

Douglas at last gathered courage under him like a coiled spring and let fly with:

"Grammy, am I like that inside?"

"What, child?"

"Am I like *that* inside?"

"Yes. A little more orderly and presentable, but just about the same—"

"And more *of* it," added Douglas, proud of his guts.

"Yes," said Grandmama, "more of it."

"Grandpa has lots more than me. His sticks out in front so he can rest his elbows on it, Grammy."

Grandma laughed and shook her head.

"And Lucie Williams, down the street, she—"

"Hush, child!" cried Grandma.

"But, she's got—"

"Never you mind what she's got. That's different. You just shush up about Lucie Williams!"

"But why is she different?"

"A darning-needle dragon-fly is coming by some day soon and sew up your mouth," said Grandma firmly.

Douglas retreated immediately, and then thoughtfully came back with, "How do you know I've got insides like that, Grandma?"

"I just know, that's all. Go 'way now."

Scowling, Douglas thumped off to the living room, still bothered about the wealth of knowledge obtainable from adults lacking absolute proof. They were *so* right.

It was at this moment that the house-bell jangled and through the square of glass on the front door, as he ran down the hall, Douglas saw a straw hat standing. The house-bell jumped its clapper again, irritatedly, which Douglas didn't like, and he opened the door.

"Good morning, child, is the lady of the house home?" Cold grey eyes in a long smooth walnut-colored face, gazed down upon him. The man was tall, thin and carried a suitcase, a briefcase, an umbrella under one bent arm, gloves, rich and thick and grey on his thin hands, and this horrible new straw hat.

Douglas backed up a little. "She's busy."

"Tell her I want to see her," said the man.

"What for?"

"To rent her upstairs room, as advertised."

"We've got ten boarders in the house, and it's already rented, go away."

"Douglas!" Grandmama was suddenly behind him, forging along the hall. "How do you do?" she said to the man. "Won't you step in? The room's right upstairs. I'll have to beg your forgiveness of this child."

"Quite all right," the man didn't smile. He stepped in, straight and stiff, and followed Grandmama. Douglas watched them ascend out of sight and heard

Grandma detailing the various conveniences of the upstairs room, heard the polite, clipped retorts of the stranger with the horrid straw hat. A suitcase bumped the upstairs floor, Grandma laughed a little, and soon came down again, hurried Douglas off to the linen closet, where she piled his arms with clean bedding, pillow cases, bath-towels, and such and then chased him upstairs.

He stopped on the room's threshold, realizing how transformed it was simply by the man living in it a moment. His straw hat on the bed, his umbrella leaning stiff against the wall like a dead bat with its dark wings tucked. That was a thought. Douglas blinked at the umbrella, and then at the man who stood in the room's center, the suitcase at his feet.

"Here," said Douglas, defiantly, and decorated the bed with the linens. "We eat at twelve sharp and if you don't come down the soup'll get cold. Grandma fixes it so it will every time."

The man reached into his pocket and withdrew a handful of change. The clinking of it made Douglas's ears twitch forward a bit. Counting out ten pennies, he tinkled them into Douglas's blouse pocket. "We shall be great friends," he said.

Douglas thought it was funny the man having nothing but pennies in his pocket, lots of them, no silver at all, no dimes, no quarters—just copper pennies.

"Thanks," said Douglas. "I can put this in my dime bank when I get it changed into a dime."

"You are saving money, young fellow?"

"I've got six dollars and fifty cents, and this makes sixty, for my trip to camp in August."

"I must wash up now. I'll see you later."

Once, in the middle of the night, Douglas had wakened to hear the storm rumbling outside, the cold hard wind shaking the house, the rain driving against the windows. And then, a bolt of terrific lightning that had landed outside the window with a silent pounding. He remembered that fear. That fear of looking around at his room and seeing it different and strange and terrible in the instantaneous light. It was the same now, in this room. For hardly any reason at all. It was just that the room was no longer the same, but changed indefinably, because this man, as quick as a lightning bolt, had shed his light about it. It was not something he liked.

The door closed in his face.

. . .

The wooden fork was going up, coming down, being inserted under the mashed potatoes and then going up. Mr. Koberman, for that was his name, had carried the fork and the wooden knife and spoon down with him when Grandmama called him to lunch.

"Mrs. Spaulding," he said, quietly. "My own cutlery. Please use it." And then, added, "I will have lunch with you today. But from tomorrow on, only breakfast and supper."

So now Grandma bustled in and out, bearing steaming tureens of soup and beans and mashed potatoes to impress her new boarder, and Douglas sat rattling his silverware on his plate-edge, because he had discovered that it irritated Mr. Koberman in the extreme.

"Stop fussing, Dougie-boy," warned Grandma, boxing him lightly behind the ear, on one of her excursions.

"I know a trick," said Douglas, getting up on his knees on his wooden chair. "Watch." He grasped his fork, licked it clean with a darting pink tongue, then picked one of the tines with his fingernail. He pointed at various sectors of the table, like a magician. Wherever he pointed, the sound of the vibrating fork-tine would emerge, like a metal elfen voice. Simply done, of course. You simply pressed the fork handle on the table-top secretly. The vibration came from the wood like a sounding board. It looked like magic. "There, and there." He plucked the fork again, pointed at Mr. Koberman's soup and the noise came from it.

Mr. Koberman's walnut-colored face was hard and firm and awful. He pushed the soup bowl away from himself, his lips twisting, and went back in his chair.

Grandma emerged from the kitchen to see this.

"Why, what's wrong, Mr. Koberman?"

"I can not eat the soup."

"Why?"

Mr. Koberman glared at Douglas.

"Because I am full and can eat no more. Thank you. A delicious meal." He excused himself stiffly and went upstairs.

Grandma looked at Douglas. "What did you do?"

"Nothing, Grammy. Why does he eat with wooden spoons?"

"Yours not to question why," snapped Grandmama. "Sake of days, I'll be glad when you go back to school. How many more weeks of vacation?"

"Ten."

"Oh, my land," said Grandma.

. . .

There was a large window half way up to the second floor, just where the stairs made an elbow and went East instead of straight ahead South. Around the frame of this window were various colored small six inch panes of glass. One of them was orange, one of them was purple, another was blue, a fourth was red, still another was green, one was yellow, and so on all around until they started over again.

In the enchanted late afternoons, when the sun fell through and struck its bright head upon the landing and thence tumbled down-stairs and between the

illuminated bars of the bannister, Douglas would climb up the sunbeams and stand, entranced, by this window, peering out at the world through the various colored panes.

There was a blue world out there now. Douglas pressed his pug nose against the blue glass and saw the blue-blue sky, and the blue people and the blue street-cars, and the blue dogs.

Now—he shifted—there was an amber world. Everything was lemonish. The two women walking by looked like the daughters of Fu Manchu. Douglas giggled at that. And the sunlight was even more pure and golden, like taffy spilling over everything.

Douglas heard a noise behind him, and he knew that Mr. Koberman stood outside the door of his room, watching.

Without turning, Douglas observed, "All kinds of worlds. Blue ones, red ones, yellow ones. All different."

After a long pause, Mr. Koberman cleared his throat and said, distractedly: "Yes. That is true. Yes. All kinds of worlds. All different."

The door closed. Douglas turned. The hall was empty. Mr. Koberman had gone back in his room.

Douglas shrugged and turned again to the glass.

"Oh, now everything is pink!"

. . .

It was simple as a rain drop. When he spooned up his morning cereal, Douglas knew it was simple. Hatred, like a pure white flame, stood inside him, burning with a steady, unflickering beauty. And when he ran upstairs, later, and saw Mr. Koberman's door ajar, the room empty, he looked in, with distaste.

It was Mr. Koberman's room now. It fit him like a shoe. It fit him and his stern stiff postures and his hard iron face, just as naturally as it had fit its other occupants. It had been bright and flowery when Miss Sadlowsky had lived here, full of nasturtiums and bright bolls of knitting cotton, and chock full of bright golden pictures on the wall. When Mr. Caples had lived here, it had reflected him. His quick, athletic vivacity. His tennis shoes under a chair, a disembodied sweater crumpled on the bed, wrinkled green pants in the closet, pictures of pretty women on the wall . . .

Now, now it was Mr. Koberman's. Bare and clean and cold and everything microscopically set in place. There was not a microbe or dust-mote or oxygen cell that did not have its appointed station here.

Again, standing before the great colored window panes, peering through each individual hue, Douglas saw Mr. Koberman returning from his morning stroll around the block. He walked with feet straight ahead, carried his cane

looped over one arm half-way to the elbow, and wore his straw hat straight and flush on his head.

Mr. Koberman was a blue man walking through a blue world with blue trees and blue flowers and—something else.

Douglas did not fathom it out. He hadn't the time. But he got an—impression—of Mr. Koberman just before the man looked up and saw Douglas staring at him. Mr. Koberman raised his umbrella as if to strike, then put it down again and walked very quickly around to the front door.

"Young man," he said, as he came up the steps swiftly, "what were you doing?"

"Just looking."

"That's all, is it?"

"Yes, sir."

It seemed that Mr. Koberman stood there fighting himself for about a minute. The veins on his face stood out like small, thin grey wires, and his eyes were like deep black holes.

He said nothing more. Turning, he went downstairs and walked around the block again.

Douglas walked slowly out to play in his sand-box in the back yard. Fifteen minutes later he heard a crash and a tinkle like a lot of plates dropped on a floor, then Grandma's slippers scuffing out front to the hall, then scuffing back to the kitchen, muttering. The screen door swannged open. The wire-spring on the screen always went *swannngg*.

"Douglas-boy!"

She held the old razor strop in her hand.

"I told you time and time again never to fling your basketball against the house. Oh, I could just cry!"

"But, Grammy, I been sitting here all the time."

"Come in the house and look what you done!"

The great colored window panes were tumbled and broken into a rainbow chaos on the stairs. A basketball lay amid the ruin. Somebody had purposely thrown the ball, shattering the panes.

And before Douglas could further present his case for being an innocent bystander, Grandma set to work manufacturing pain across his round little bottom. Douglas leaped like three members of an epileptic ballet troupe, but Grandma's eye, which descended directly from a long line of women who had shot Indians in covered wagons, was unerring, and the strop journeyed straight and true. Douglas sang an age-old song to it.

Nursing a great hurt anger in his mind, and a greater pulsing of his nether region, Douglas retreated to his sandpile and built a castle against the world, and hid his mind in it, like a mental ostrich.

He knew who had thrown that ball through the window. Too well, he knew. A man with a straw hat and an umbrella and a stiff, parchment face, and a cold, grey room. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Douglas dribbled tears into the sand. Just wait. Just wait.

The thin tinkling shuff-shuf-shuff noise was Grandma sweeping up the glittering debris. She brought it out back and cascaded it into the trash-bin. Blue, pink, white, yellow meteors of glass dropping brightly down, and Grandma looking heart-broken about it.

After Grandma went inside, Douglas dragged over and saved out three pieces of the precious stuff. Pink and green and blue. For some reason, Mr. Koberman did not like this glass. Douglas would keep it and see what would happen . . .

. . .

When a slow heavy tread filled the hall, and a thick mahogany cane rattled in the cane-rack, that always meant that Grandpa was home for the day. He arrived at five-ten, every night, just ahead of most of the boarders, a newspaper in his black coat pocket, and a peppermint stick to spoil Douglas's appetite for dinner. Grandpa was like that.

Douglas ran to embrace the large stomach that was Grandpa's main defense against a long and vigorous life-battle with circumstance. Grandpa looked down over the cliff of that stomach and saw Douglas at the base of it and cried, "Hallo, down there!"

Then, seated in the great Morris chair, his spectacles attached, Grandpa would scan the Chicago papers with a keen professional glinting of his old grey eyes.

"Grandma was cutting chickens again today," said Douglas. "She sure uses up a lot of them. It's fun watching."

Grandpa kept reading. "You're a cold-blooded little skyte," he said. "Like to watch her slice 'em, eh? Hah-hah!"

Sitting on Grandpa's knee, Douglas felt the thunder of that subterranean laughter explode down through the old bones and echoed outward on his vibrating knee-cap. A lesson in sound-transmission.

"I'm not cold-blooded, Gramps. I'm just curious."

"Why, look here now," rumbled Grampa, pursing his lips and scowling seriously. "I recall the day that young woman got herself killed down at the railroad station. It didn't bother you a mite. You just walked up and looked at her, blood and all."

"But why shouldn't I look?"

Grandpa laid aside his paper. "Doesn't it make you sick?"

"No."

"You're a queer duck. But you've got sense, Douglas-boy. Be that way. Don't be afraid of anything, ever in your life. Life is just full of things that aren't worth

being afraid of. A body is a body and blood is blood and there aren't any bad things in the world except the ones we make in our minds. We teach each other to be afraid. We learn certain reaction patterns to certain stimuli. Death, for instance. Orientals have no fear of it. They deem it fine and honorable to die, Dougie-boy. And some of our European imported cultures have trumped up a lot of sassafras about death being a dark horror. Why—"

He stopped, swallowed, blinked, and then chuckled.

"*What* am I saying? You don't understand a word."

"Yes, I do. Go ahead, Gramps. It's fun."

Gramps pinched his ear lightly. "Funny duck. Your father must have raised you funny. But then he was a military fighting man, and you lived so near him 'till you came here six months ago."

"I'm not funny at all. I'm just me."

"There—" Gramps nodded, "you have a point. There is no norm among humans, not really. Certain cultural norms, perhaps, but individual norms—no, no."

This seemed like the moment ripened on the tree of time for picking. Douglas picked.

"Gramps, what if a man didn't have a heart and lungs and a stomach?"

Grandpa was by now used to such off-bound questions. "Well, then, I guess he'd be dead."

"No, that's not what I mean. What if he didn't have a heart and lungs and stomach and still walked around, alive?"

"That," rumbled Gramps, "would be a miracle."

"But, besides that," asked Douglas, quickly, "I don't mean a—a miracle. I mean—what if he was all different inside. Not like us."

"Oh, I see what you mean. Hmm. He wouldn't be quite human then, would he, Douglas?"

"I guess not. Have you got a heart and brain and lungs, Gramps?"

"I should live to tell you I have."

"How do you know?"

"Uh—" Gramps stopped. "Well—I—that is—I." He had to laugh. "Tell the truth, I don't. Never seen them. Never been to a doctor, never had an x-ray. Might as well be as solid as a potato inside for all I know."

"And have I got a heart and a stomach and lungs?"

"Yes, you've got a stomach," said Grandma, standing in the parlor entrance by the sliding doors. "I have to feed it. And you've got lungs, because you yell loud enough to wake Teddy Roosevelt. And you've got dirty hands, go wash them, dinner's ready, Grandfather, come to the table, get going, Douglas."

In the ensuing melee, with boarders streaming down from upstairs hurriedly, Gramps, if he had any intentions of questioning Douglas further about the weird conversation, had no opportunity to do so. Dinner was ready and if

they delayed an instant longer Grandma and the potatoes would develop simultaneous lumps.

To add further injury to insult, Mr. Koberman was a man who worked nights and slept days. Every morning at eight he arrived home, devoured a light breakfast, took a brief walk around the block, and then climbed primly upstairs to sleep soundlessly through-out the day until six at night, when he roused himself for supper.

This meant that Douglas had to be quiet. Not being quiet by nature, frustration set in upon him like a growing abscess.

Resultantly, whenever Grandma was over visiting next door at Mrs. Eddy's or at Mrs. Singer's buying groceries, Douglas would vent his repressions by stomping up and down stairs beating continually upon a drum. Golf-balls, rolled slowly down the steps, were also delightful. Followed by a quick race around the house killing Indians and then upstairs again to flush the toilet three times in succession.

After two days of this, Douglas realized he was getting no complaints. On the third day, after Grandma had gone to the store, Douglas yelled outside Mr. Koberman's door for ten minutes without criticism.

He tried the door, carefully, and opened it. The shades were drawn, and Mr. Koberman lay in bed in his sleeping clothes, the covers thrown back. Gently, up and down, he breathed. His face looked like ashes and he didn't do anything but lie there.

"Hello, Mr. Koberman."

The colorless walls echoed Mr. Koberman's regular breathing.

"Mr. Koberman, hello!"

Bouncing the golf-ball, Douglas walked across the room. No response. He yelled. Still no response. The man just lay there like a papier-mâché mannequin, not complaining.

"Mr. Koberman! Mr. Koberman!"

Douglas glanced about the room with quick, curious eyes. Upon the top of the bureau rested the wooden eating utensils specifically used by Mr. Koberman.

That gave Dougie-boy an idea. Grinning maliciously, he ran down and came back up with a silver fork. Picking the tines he held it near the sleeping face.

Mr. Koberman winced. Winced and half twisted on his bed, groaning a little, muttering something with dry, bitter lips.

Response. Good. Swell.

Yelling, shouting, having great fun, Douglas charged about the room, once in a while tinging the fork at Mr. Koberman to see his lips twitch distastefully. But he didn't wake up. He didn't look as if he could, even if he wanted to.

Grandma came home.

Retreating, Douglas had to come down stairs looking innocent.

The other boarders, laughing and talking at the table that evening, Mr. Koberman silent and sullen among them—this attitude being attributed to liver

trouble by Grandma—were put into a silent stasis by Grandfather who cleared out an obstruction in his throat and spoke about the recent deaths in the town.

"Save that for later," said Grandma. "When we're drinking our coffee."

"No—but it's certainly enough to make a newspaper editor prick up his ancient ears," said Grandpa, carefully eyeing them all. "That young Miss Larsson, lives over across the ravine now. Found her dead three days ago for no reason at all, with funny kinds of marks all over her body, and a facial contortion that would make Dante cringe. And that other young lady, what was her name? Miss White? She disappeared and never did come back."

"Things like that happen alla time," Mr. Peters, the garage mechanic put in, chewing. "You ever peek at the Missing Persons Bureau file? It's *that* long." He illustrated. "Can't tell *what* happens to most of 'em."

Grandma cut in with, "Anyone want any more dressing?" She ladeled liberal spoons of it from the chicken's sad interior. Douglas watched, thinking about how a chicken can have two kinds of guts—God-made and Man-made.

Well, how about THREE kinds of guts? Why not?

Conversation rolled along merrily about the mysterious death of so-and-so, and, oh yes, remember, only a week ago Marion Barsumian died of heart failure, but maybe that didn't connect up, or did it, you're crazy, forget it, why talk about it at supper, on a full stomach, yet.

Cigarettes fired, the diners idled lazily into the parlor, where Grandpa was king on his Morris-chair throne, and gave leave to each to speak his speech.

"Never can tell," declared the garage mechanic, "we maybe got a vampire in our town."

"In the year 1927? Oh, go on now, Bob."

"Why, sure. Kill 'em with silver bullets. Anything silver for that matter. I read it in a book somewheres, once. Sure, I did."

Douglas sat on the floor, looking at his fingers. He looked up at Mr. Koberman. Mr. Koberman was just sitting. Mr. Koberman who ate with wooden knives and forks and spoons, and carried only pennies in his pocket.

"It'd be poor judgment," said Grandpa, "to call anything by a name. We don't even know what a hobgoblin or a vampire or a troll is. Could be a lot of things we don't know. You can't shove them in categories with labels, and say they'll act one way or tother. That's silly. They're people, that's all. People who do things. Yes, that's the way to put it—people who *do* things."

The radio programs, the card games, the ice-cream served later, the goodnights, and into bed.

The stars, the moon, the wind, the ticking of the clock and the chiming of hours into dawn, the sun coming up, and here it was another morning, another day, and Mr. Koberman coming from his walk after breakfast, and through it all Douglas stood off like a small mechanism whirring and watching with carefully microscopic eyes.

At hot high noon, Grandma went away to the store to buy groceries. Douglas yelled outside Koberman's door for a moment and then tried to get in. This time it was locked and he had to go get the pass-key.

Finally inside, Douglas closed the door and heard Mr. Koberman breathing deep again. Douglas placed the hunk of blue glass from the broken window panes against his face.

Looking through it, he found himself in a blue room, in one of those blue worlds that were different from the world he knew. As different as was the red world. Here were aquamarine pieces of furniture, cobalt bed-clothes, turquoise ceilings, and the sullen dark blue of Mr. Koberman's face and arms and his blue chest rising, falling. Also—something else.

Mr. Koberman's eyes were wide open, staring at him with a hungry darkness. Douglas drew back a little, pulled the blue glass from his eyes. Mr. Koberman's eyes were shut. Blue glass again—open. Blue glass away—shut. Blue glass again—open. Away—shut. Funny. Douglas experimented. Through the glass the eyes seemed staring and avid. Ordinarily they looked tightly sealed.

But it was the rest of Mr. Koberman's body. . . .

Douglas must have stood there for five minutes, amazed. Thinking about blue worlds, red worlds, yellow worlds, side by side, living together like glass panes around the big white translucent glass. Side by side, the colored panes, Mr. Koberman had said himself.

So this was why the glass had been destroyed. At least partially why.

"Mr. Koberman, wake up! Mr. Koberman, wake up!"

No response.

"Mr. Koberman, where do you work at night? Mr. Koberman, where do you work at night?"

No response.

"In a red world or a green world or a yellow world, Mr. Koberman!?"

No response.

Douglas went to the kitchen and pulled open the great squeaking drawers where all the knives lay gleaming in regular, shining rows. He picked out the sharpest one and the biggest one and very calmly climbed the stairs again, opened the door to Mr. Koberman's room and closed it . . .

. . .

Douglas came casually into the kitchen and laid something on the table.

"Grandmama, what's this?"

Grandma was busy fingering a pie-crust into a pan. Glancing up briefly, eyes leaping the barrier of her glasses, she said, "I don't know."

It was square, like a box, and elastic. It was colored bright orange. It had four square tubes, colored blue attached to it. It smelled funny. Not good, but yet not too bad.

"Never saw anything like it before?"

"No."

"That's what *I* thought."

Douglas left it there, went out of the kitchen. Five minutes later he returned with something else. "How about this, Grandma?"

It resembled a bright pink linked chain with a purple triangle at one end.

"Don't bother me," sniffed Grandma. She looked. "It's only a chain. Go 'way."

He went away. Next time he returned with two hands full. A ring, a square, a pyramid, a rectangle—and others. "This isn't all. Lots more where this came from."

Grandma said, "Yes, yes," in a far off, busy tone.

"You were wrong, Grandma."

"About what?"

"About all humans being the same inside."

"Stop talking nonsense."

"Grandma, where's my piggy-bank?"

"On the mantel."

"Thanks."

He tramped into the parlor and reached up on the mantel.

Grandpa came home from the office at five-ten.

"Grandpa, will you come upstairs with me?"

"Sure, son. Why?"

"I want to show you something. It's not nice, but it's interesting."

Grandpa chuckled and followed his grandson's pattering feet up to Mr. Koberman's door.

"Grandma mustn't know about this, ever. She wouldn't like it."

Douglas pushed the door open. "There."

Grandpa gasped.

. . .

Douglas remembered that last scene very well. Standing over the naked body, the coroner and his assistants around him. Grandma, downstairs, asking somebody, "What's going on up there?" and Grandpa saying, shakily, "I'll take Douglas away on a long vacation so he can forget this whole ghastly affair. Ghastly, ghastly affair."

Douglas said, "Why should it be bad? I don't see anything bad with it. I don't feel bad."

And then the coroner shivered and said,

"He's dead all right."

His assistant said, "Did you look at those THINGS in the pan of water, and in the wrapping paper?"

"Oh, my God, my God, yes, I saw them."

"Christ."

The coroner bent over the body. "This better be kept a secret, boys. It wasn't murder. It was a mercy the boy acted. God knows what may have happened if he hadn't."

"What was Koberman—a vampire? A monster?"

"Maybe. I don't know. I don't know anything. Something—not human."

The coroner moved his hands deftly over the suture.

Douglas was proud of his work. He'd gone to a lot of trouble. But he had watched Grandmother carefully and remembered. Needle and thread and all. All in all, Mr. Koberman was as neat a job as any chicken ever popped into hell by Grandma.

"I heard the boy say that Koberman LIVED even after all 'that' was taken out of him. Kept on *living.* God."

"Did the boy say that?"

"He did."

"Then—what killed Koberman?"

The coroner drew a few strands of sewing thread from their bedding. "This—" he said.

Sunlight blinked coldly off a half-revealed treasure trove; six dollars and seventy cents worth of silver dimes inside the chest.

"I think Douglas made a wise investment," said the coroner, sewing the flesh back up over the "dressing" quickly.

THIRTEEN

REUNION

Every Monday morning the clugging clamor on the back-porch, the quaking of the house in every old cranny and joint, signified that the ritual of clothes-washing had begun.

The clothes would lie in brilliant mounds, sorted out, ready to be dispatched into the cauldron where the metal clunkers went up and down with a *eeee-aww—eeee-aww* noise, and the sound of much thrashing water. Within that electrified machine the surgings would be unbelievable, as the clothes swam about, were submerged by merciless attacks of the plungers. They seemed almost alive, floundering their empty sleeves, bobbing their deserted necks and showing, without so much as a blush, their underskirts. The mad bubbling continued until late afternoon. Then the wind snapped a long regiment of materials upon wire lines under the blossoming apple trees.

It was Malcolm Briar's duty to fetch soap chips from the cellar, or gather spilled clothes-pins, and keep his mouth shut, being careful not to raise dust to spoil the wind-flapped linens. Malcolm scuttled about the yard obedient to every shrill order of his Aunt Opie, but secretly rebelling against her ordinances.

So here it was—a particular Monday. Aunt Opie, her mouth chocked with clothes-pins, wiped the lines clean with a rag, and began hanging clothes. But Malcolm, nicknamed Mal, sought refuge in the attic of the large old house on Oak Street; this very same house where his Mom and Dad had lived before their deaths.

He heard Aunt Opie shrilling down in the yard. Her voice was like the pump-handle's creaking sound in the kitchen.

"Mal! Oh, Mal, oh, Mal!"

Mal surveyed his kingdom below through a small hole in the dusty attic window. Aunt Opie kept calling, "Mal!"

Mal giggled. She would never find him up here. This was the Robber's Roost. None could enter except those who rapped and softly enunciated "Hing-a-ding-a-rock-in-my-shoe!"

About him were the collected paraphernalia of fifty years of living and dying. All the implements, the unnecessaries, the frills, the nick-nacks collected, shelved and tucked away by aging humans when they no longer served a purpose.

Small tinker-toys of babies now grown into cynics with their own babies. Highchairs gathering dust, offering seating space for fat, lazy old spiders who sat grayly and rarely considered the effort of spinning a regular web.

Neat stacks, leaned against the odorous walls, were pictures of the family: Mom and Pop, Grandma and Grandpa, great-grandparents, cousins, and his brother David, who had died aged seven.

The great brown trunks with the metal hasps on them. If you blew your breath and wiped the hasps they would gleam like sudden brass stars in the attic night. And if you pulled up on the hasps, the trunk mouth gaped open, and the odor of millennial mothballs would spring outward into your nostrils. With it would come the odor that memory imparts to a room, an odor all its own.

Here, Mal seemed happiest.

. . .

Downstairs, where Uncle Walter sat, a pallid thin old insect of an invalid, with his feet from day to day in boiling waters and ice waters, it was not fun. Years had stamped Aunt Opie into an irrevocable, stern mold; her whalebone corset tightened in her shape, just as Uncle Walter had tightened in her life.

"Mal!"

Mal listened. He heard the washing machine's ominous thunder still alive down below in the sunlight world, and if you listened closer, the hacking choke of Uncle Walter.

Inserting small hands into the clothes stacked inside one great old trunk, Mal found, first of all, his baby clothes. Clothes that he had once worn himself, before that part of him that was younger, smaller and uneducated, had died. For it was like dying, seeing these clothes—it seemed impossible he could ever have inhabited them. Now he was eleven and could not hope to retrogress backward to those squalling days, and he was amazed that he had survived being so infinitesimal.

Discarding that, Mal next seized upon his brother's clothes. A fine gray little suit, with a gray cap that had fitted snugly upon David's handsome head, he imagined. But now David could not use it. He was captured in wood, like a fly in amber, prisoned deep in Rose Lawn cemetery forevermore. On Memorial Day, Mal would walk upon David's real estate at that cemetery, give him a fistful of flowers and want to hear him laugh or talk.

Next, Dad's old walking cane. Inscriptions on it from some mystical lodge. Next to it an old rubber football nose-guard Dad had worn over his face when he was in college.

"Oh, Dad, Dad, what were you like? Dad, Dad, what were you like?"

Dad was a picture in an oaken frame; a young, handsome man with twinkling eyes and a high, clutching collar.

Mother wore her hair in a soft pompadour and showed her teeth, which were small, feminine—like white kernels of close-set corn.

Just pictures. Clothes, doodads, things collected in an old attic.

Here was a net blouse, yellowed by time, that Mother had worn perhaps to a card party, or to play Mah-Jong, or to see a stage-play of *Hamlet* with John Barrymore, maybe.

"Oh, Mom, Mom! Where are you? What were *you* like? Mom!"

The tears would roll in soft streaks down his face. And his crying would be mellowed by the very understanding garret, who had seen all things, even tears, shelved and forgotten and gathering dust.

Mal was hungry.

It was lunchtime, and the rollers of Uncle Walter's wheelchair rolled soft rubber through the hall three stories below. Momentarily, the pound of the washing machine was snapped into silence.

Replacing the clothes, stacking the memories neatly back into place, hasping the trunk, wiping his eyes, Mal descended softly downstairs to acknowledge the threats and tongue-lashing that would accompany his lunch.

"Oh, THERE you are, Malcolm!"

. . .

After lunch, when Uncle Walter had retreated to his room to snore away the hot afternoon, Mal helped snatch clothes from the line, toss them into baskets and deposit them before an iron in the kitchen that would hiss if you spit at it.

Aunt Opie would iron all afternoon and he would help. In the early summer evening he would be allowed an hour to play with the neighborhood kids "until it gets dark, then come straight home, and don't go near the river."

Mal sat there.

"Didn't you hear what I said?" snapped Aunt Opie, wiping the supper plates dry at the sink.

"What, Aunt Opie?"

"Go and play," she said, exasperated. "Honestly, you're more trouble than all my money. You're an awful waste of flesh."

"Am I, Aunt Opie?"

"Yes, you are." She moved about in the pantry. "I get so tired of having you under foot."

"I guess I'm not much use," said Mal, staring straight ahead, stricken with that helpless, constricting thought. "Why are people born, anyway. Aunt Opie?"

"To keep undertakers busy. Now go out of the house and play."

"I'm too tired."

"Go up to bed, then."

"I'm too tired to go to bed."

"That's a silly thing to say."

The screen door slammed behind him.

"Don't slam the door, Mal!"

He walked slowly across the porch.

"And don't scuff your shoes that way. Wear out the heels a month ahead of time."

Snap.

The next he knew he was upstairs. He did not remember the instant when the decision had come like the sun falling in his lap. He didn't recall charging through the house on his way up to his room. He found himself now, crying without tears, assembling before himself on his bed all of his worldly possessions.

His marbles, his handkerchiefs, his shirts and overalls, his pencils and books, everything and anything. He put it all in big paper sacks.

. . .

The sun was just going down when he let himself out of his room. In a few moments Aunt Opie would blow her whistle—the silver one with the marble inside that fluttered like a captive bird when blown upon—and call his name.

"Mal!"

There. She was calling now.

"Mal!"

He climbed rickety stairs in almost total darkness, to let himself into the hot, thick, ancient, but friendly, smell of the attic.

"Mal!"

Aunt Opie's voice was so far away it was a dream. The other world, below, no longer existed. It was put away and dead.

Mal opened the nearest trunk. He buried his clothes in it, deep. Deep down into the years, where all things that will never be used again are buried. Stacked neat, his shirts by his father's and his brother's shirts. His small cap by David's cap. His shoes side by side with mother's shoes. His trinkets dumped into the cache of all Time's trinkets.

Then he got out Dad's picture and Mom's picture again.

He carried them to the tiny hole in the dirty window. There was a light-beam so tiny it was almost like web spun from the machinery of a golden spider. That beam picked out one last smile from Mom, one last understanding twinkle of Dad's eyes.

Quite suddenly, the light-beam vanished. There was nothing but a reactive image in the darkness of those eyes, and that smile. They hung in mid-air. They would not go away.

"Mom! Dad, what were you like? Wouldn't you like to see how I turned out?" A long pause. "Huh?" A long pause. "Wouldn'tcha?" A long pause. "Mom." A long pause. "Dad?"

Something shifted in the dark.

"I only want to be up here with you. There's so much of you up here. All the things you were. If I could put them together—maybe—I could make you again. Maybe you'd live again!"

It was true. Deep in these trunks Mal could imagine every sweat droplet ever shed by Dad, every molecule of flesh that had ever slipped from his fingers, a little cell of skin, a little fragment of fingernail. The under-arms of the coats, where the good animal sweat of Dad had been expelled and absorbed and kept in summer and winter. It was all there. The clothing was Dad. Besides that, people are like reptiles shedding skin, but in different ways—in small shards, in microscopic bits. They would be here, too, those little unseeable bits. All in the trunks. Here in the attic. Dad. Here and now! Mom. Here and now! David, too.

Mal trembled violently. From now on he'd stay up here. He'd never go downstairs. He wanted to stay up here, with them. To be one of them, and waste away and waste away into vanishing. Until he was nothing more than a picture stacked against the wall; a bundle of folded clothing, a scatter of childish toys.

This was only the beginning of an adventure. Why, there had been no living yet, at all. That would come as each hour advanced and he groped nearer toward the reality of Mom and Dad and David.

He trembled like a candle-flame in a breeze. He was almost blown out by the violent storm inside himself.

Sorting out all of Mom's things, he examined them. Thread by thread, button by button, caressing and kissing and understanding them. He put her picture amid them. Her jewelry, her beads, her rings, and a few pitiful compacts of dried, musty cosmetic.

Symbols. Her symbols. And with these symbols, like a young witch or sorcerer, laying them out in designs on the attic floor, and talking to them, and chanting over them in a childish piping, perhaps he could summon back one or all of those loved ones from their deep moist graves!

Three trunks. Like coffins. Each containing the accumulated magic symbols of three people he had never seen except in his brain.

He threw open all three trunks at once.

ALL THREE!

. . .

"Mal!"

Early morning. A week later. Maybe a month. Maybe even ten years later. Maybe fifteen years.

"Mal!" Aunt Opie, on the green lawn, shouted and blew the silver whistle. Despairing, she thumped into the house, perhaps to pick up the phone.

If she called the police, well, Mal didn't care. He sat up here and laughed a little while things evolved toward that final phase. Things were working right.

He had no fear, nothing but a calm, certain assurance that everything would be all right.

Already he was part of the discarded things. One of those useless objects, as Aunt Opie had labeled him, best thrown in the garret, framework for spiders to build gray tapestry on. He was fitting in already, sinking into the dark, becoming a shadow, becoming like Mom and Dad. Just a picture, just darkness, just clothes, just baubles, just memories. It would take a little time, that was all.

He had not eaten. Hunger was not in him, nor room for hunger. It was simply enough to be up here. His face must by now be filthy black, his clothes in a horrible state, his body in even more of a thinned, neglected condition. Just a little longer.

He watched the hours crawl by like bright animals.

He began to get more and more sensitive to the place. Now, at last, the fulfilment. Dad and Mom and David and he. One large, rollicking family!

From the odors, from the perfumes imbedded in pyramids of clothing, from the pictures, from the furniture they had sat in, from books in yellow piles, now came Dad and Mom and David! To meet him, to meet him, to join hands, to kiss him, to hold him, to laugh with him! Laugh and dance and sing!

"Dad! Mom! I'm so glad to see you! To really see you! I knew if I kept trying, I could do it. It's like magic! Oh, are you really here? Mom, Dad!"

They were there.

Mal felt tears of happiness warm on his face.

And then the darkness was split down the middle by a great knife of fresh daylight.

Mal screamed.

. . .

The door leading upward into the attic was thrown open and coming up the daylight knife was the stern stiff figure of Aunt Opie!

"Mal? Mal, is that you? Mal? Are you up here?"

Again Mal screamed.

"Mom, Dad, don't go away! Mom, Dad, David!"

Daylight infested the attic. Mal rolled upon the floor in a tangled skein of clothes and baubles. Aunt Opie darted forward.

"Have you been up here for four days? You worried us that long! Mercy God Almighty, Malcolm Briar, look at you. LOOK at you! LOOK AT YOU!"

She grabbed him, twisted him toward the door. Daylight hurt his eyes and he stumbled.

"Walter!" cried Aunt Opie. "Walter, come see where I found him!"

It was insane. The very last of it all. No matter how Mal screamed, babbled, cried out, carried on, or tried to attack Aunt Opie, her mind was made up.

Spring cleaning.

The attic was emptied of all its dark treasure. The baubles were thrown heartlessly into an incinerator. The pictures were sold for their valuable frames.

But impossible of all impossibilities, was the washing-machine churning, churning on the back porch. Inside the washing-machine, all the writhing clothes that had belonged to Mom and Dad and David! Churning, jumping, frothing, shuddering. Dad's shirts. Mom's blouses. David's play-suits!

All of the magic, the memory, the symbolism being washed, churned, beaten, soaked, twisted and laved out by the merciless metal plungers and the acid soap and the slushing water!

All of the precious long ago, the sweet immortal perfumes damned by lysol and water.

All the tiny flakes of living and memory now castrated, cleansed, put asunder and drowned!

And the clothes, as they came, one by one from the machine, hung like empty corpses, no more to live, no more life to them, on the line beneath the blossoming apple trees, swaying in a slow, hot wind.

Mal collapsed, twisting in Aunt Opie's hard hands. He screamed and screamed, crying out his heart and his lungs and weakly sobbing into an insane hysteria.

"Mom, Dad, David, don't go away! Don't, oh, don't!"

Sinking into a nauseated darkness, the last sound he heard was the merciless thrashing, plunging, gurgling of the washing-machine, killing, stomping, pounding, *down and around and down....*

FOURTEEN

AUTOPSY (KILLER, COME BACK TO ME!)

CHAPTER ONE

Ricky Wolfe's Woman

If you've never watched an autopsy, then this is what they do. They cut the body down the middle. Not all the way, but far enough for you to see everything from collarbones to kidneys. When the peels of flesh are tethered back with bright surgical clamps, the various organs thus exposed are examined closely before being sliced out with an expert move of the scalpel. They are then set aside for chemical analysis. The brain is removed from its case by the simple expedient of lifting the skull off in a circle from the ears up.

If you're a criminal, you get special attention. You're not much different inside than anybody else, but the doctors keep looking, as if some day they'd actually find a criminal's body that didn't have a heart.

An interesting case turned up at our laboratory this morning. They brought in the cadaver of one John Broghman. He had little blue tattoos dinting his chest and pelvic regions. On second look, you saw they weren't tattoos, but bullet holes.

I'd like to tell John Broghman's story as it came to me, flat and cold and naked on an autopsy table. It's not sugar. It's carbolic and cyanide. It's a heart beating like a tommy-gun, faster, faster and faster until—well. . . .

He had big lungs and good muscles. He had sponge sacs in his rib casings that maybe one day sucked in the air of the world and liked it. From the build of him you could see he was from a small town where those lungs could grow and get started. Then, you can see where his father and mother died; you can see where he had a younger brother who wasn't much help; you can see where they moved in with an aunt and uncle who didn't love them, and you can see where the uncle made Johnny Broghman work—too young and too hard—in a coal shaft. Those spots on Johnny's lungs—that's what tells you all about those years.

Then, you look at Broghman's cold, inert stomach and you see the shaping hand of hunger that had bruised it. Right here. See?

And now, if you'll look closer, deep in this cold, corrugated brain, you'll find

the hatred and the wondering and the wanting of Johnny Broghman growing and making a sort of tumor, a fester spot. Inside this brain you'll find. . . .

. . .

Broghman stood on the corner of that dusty little town, watching grasshoppers sweeping over the hot blue sky in a curtain.

The bank was across the street. A stolen automobile, its motor still running warm, was parked in front of it. He'd parked it there with his own hands and then strode across the searing hot asphalt to stand here on this corner, sweating, thinking, knowing that there was something ahead of him that he wanted.

He wasn't certain what it was. Maybe it was in the bank. Maybe it had to do with guns, power, danger and—something else.

The gun was heavy in its leather nest under his arm.

Something he wanted for a long time. What? Something he wanted.

A woman walked along with a slow, thoughtful walk. Her eyes went through him, away, and then slid back again to make a man of him, up and down, and her red lips parted as if she knew his mind. Broghman swallowed thickly, trying to look away.

She stood there, eyes narrowing. Then, she revolved slowly, put one foot after the other with a sort of measured rhythm, and went away with her hair like long fire on her neck, and her eyes like amber metal that could catch emotion and keep it there.

Broghman's stomach muscles lay down like crouching animals. He began to walk. Across the streaming street, up the high curb. His big ears pricked, alert. There—the car motor, still muttering inside its casing. Now into the cool cavern of the bank. Cool expanse of marble. Shining cages that kept domesticated animals inside them with cool green money at their pale, domesticated fingertips.

Broghman lifted the dead weight of the gun, fitted into his calloused hand.

From there on, things resolved into slow, sludgy, underwater gestures of people suspended in a slow motion film. Lazily, his face slowly shading white under the regular pallor of his skin, the little teller shifted a slow hand to money stacked in green stratas, extracted it sluggishly, shoved it gradually forward until it sank with agonizing lack of gravity into Broghman's palm. He pocketed the money. It took what seemed like three minutes to do it.

Then things speeded up to triple action. An alarm gong was like a kick of adrenalin setting things into blurred quickness. Echoes of the gong jumped back from marble cliffs, warning.

Broghman ran across smooth stone acres. People shouted. Everything whirled hotly in his eyes when the sun struck him as he entered the daylight.

He didn't know if it was the sun or not, but when he twisted the car door open, he pulled back and gasped.

She waited for him in the car.

That woman with the hair like long fire and the eyes like yellow metal, who'd walked by him a few minutes ago, looking into him and knowing him and walking on. Her hard fingers gripped the steering wheel, so that the knuckles stood out whitely.

Recovering, he swung sideways into the seat, poking the gun. "Get out!"

"No," she said it simply, and meant it.

He pushed the gun further, against her white blouse.

"I said *get out!*"

Her answer was to engage the gears, jump the accelerator, thrusting the car away from the curb, shrieking rubber. She flushed the car to seventy miles an hour before he knew what she was doing. He had glimpses of darting trees, spinning signs, buildings, with her voice biting through it all:

"I'm driving! Wherever you want to go, *I'm driving!"*

Sitting there, the color rose in his protruding cheekbones. He glanced back at the vanishing main street. "Move fast, that's all. Take Highway 43."

"Don't be dumb," she snapped it back at him. "That's a graveyard road. We'll go *my* way. I *know* this damned burg inside and out, like a book."

He realized he was shuddering, and had to clasp his knees, bending to ease the sick pain in his belly, as if he'd been shot.

"What's wrong?" she said. "They get you?"

"No." He made himself straight. "I'm all right. I imagine things. Stomach. Like a hot hole in it. *Guh.*"

. . .

Then, while the miles spun under them, he kept silent, nursing his pain. Once, glancing up, he saw her sharp profile against running sky-line, green trees, bright gas stations. Her lips were full to stubbornness, and hard like the even teeth backing them up. The eyes were the startling part, like feral things plucked from a lusting cat animal and caught in her shocking white face. They didn't belong. Not with all that flame on her head falling in loose, whipping fingers of color to her shoulders, tucked behind almost man-like ears.

After about five minutes she said, "We've lost them." She held the speed high, through hot desert. "How much money?"

He counted it. "Seven hundred."

"Chicken feed." He saw her trim ankle muscles tauten, pressing out more mileage. Slowly, he touched the curve of her leg with his blue eyes, coming up along her brown woolen skirt to the small breasts and the open neck of her white blouse where the cords of her throat went stiffly, yet beautifully up.

"Stop the car," he said, quietly.

She ignored him.

"Who in hell are you!" he demanded, hotly, "running me around! This was *my* job!"

"It's *ours,* now." She gave him her brief, metallic glance. "You're no killer. I know. It's not in your face. Your eyes are open too wide for killing."

"Stop the car."

Parked, she looked straight ahead. "I'm cutting myself in," she said to the road. "I been outside a little while, but I'm coming back in."

He twisted her from the wheel.

"You're damn well in."

He kissed her so it hurt them both. The world went away. A siren, if it had whined, would not have been heard, or a gun shooting. Only her cynically stubborn lips existed, moving under his.

She pulled back, eyes angry and yet—puzzled—a moment.

"Don't do that again," she let him know, evenly. She made the wheels roar again. "I'm the one who does that! Remember from now on, *you!*"

It was his turn to be puzzled. "Okay, okay," he said.

Desert wind came in the windows, searing, burning them.

She parked the car for the night on a little dirt road equipped with stars, a moon, and ranch lights hanging on the foothills.

She slid from the car, shoes rustling in dry thatches of bramble.

He said, "Why'd you climb in my car today?"

She had her answer ready.

"You were headed for the morgue. I put you on a detour. You need training. The way you walk, talk, hold a gun. You looked like a kid waiting for a ticket in front of a dime movie, today."

"Yeah—"

"Let me finish. Remember Ricky Wolfe?"

"God, *yes.*"

"I was with him," she said, "for five years."

The name of Ricky Wolfe was like a hammer striking. Ricky Wolfe, the big-time, all-around gangman. A guy nobody proved nothing on, with a capacity for gin and blood that was legendary.

She stood there and told him about it. "Six weeks ago they killed him. In Iowa. Threw his body in the river. Only way you could tell it was him, was his wallet. They never had a print of his fingers." She breathed deeply. "So I came west again, here to California, covered up awhile working as a waitress—"

"Then I came along."

"Yeah. I saw you and knew that you needed training or you'd be dead too soon. Ricky was different. He was broken in when I got him. But I always wanted to see what I could do with a beginner."

She turned to him. "You're only good as your woman is good. If she's a heller,

a whiner, a baby, you'll be on a dead-slab in no time. She won't let you think clear." She showed him her hard white fingers. "My nails are clipped short for a cat. I won't rip your back. Now—it's up to you. You want to die tomorrow or four years from now?"

"Is it that way?"

"That's the way it is."

He suddenly broke, standing there. He didn't know why but he just had his arms around her, trembling.

"I'm glad you came. I wouldn't want to be alone tonight."

She kissed him, almost clumsily, and he thought he felt her tremble deep inside.

Then, she slapped his face with her hands, twice, hard.

"A kiss's for one thing! A slap's for another! You're not a kid! Learn that, if you stick with me! Grow up!"

He stopped shaking.

In his nostrils the warm clean smell of her body, with no dime perfume to spoil its cleanliness, became suddenly apparent.

He waited for her to make the first move.

"I'm not a kid now . . ." he said.

Their feet rustled in the dry sand.

CHAPTER TWO

L. A. Boss-Man

He was wanted. For the first time in his life people actually were seeking him. The same people who'd shoved him into gutters, starved his parents, ignored him in coal mines, refused him coffee dimes—these same people were horrifiedly aware of him now, and concerned with his welfare, and what he was doing each day. Sure. Sure.

Broghman, in angry, shocked rips, tore the morning paper down and across and down again.

Julie set a steaming coffee-mug on the table of the Motel Inn room and ordered, "Drink it. And quit reading papers. They lie like hell."

He felt of his big brown hands and the gun shining on the blue table-cloth. "God's sake, Julie, I'm not a criminal. I'm a human being."

"Sure. Both of us are. Self preservation you know."

He learned to walk tall, stiffer, with his guts tucked in. She told him how to talk faster, pull a gun by the swiftest, safest method, pressing it close to his body so only a few people would see it. She could have written a book about banks. She wrote on her tongue for him. There were ways of hitting people's nerves with the knife edge of your stiff-hand to knock them out as good as a gun—she

showed him. A moustache appeared sandily on his lip. His hair grew sandy on his neck, and grew the way she ordered it to grow.

It was acting, rehearsing for a bigger part.

In his dreams, her voice struck again and again at him:

"No, no, Johnny! Not *that* way, *this* way!"

The day Julie bought the new car and drove into Victorville, Broghman found himself sweltering in the little two-by-four room, rummaging idly through her traveling kit, sorting out handkerchiefs, a lipstick, a packet of photographs.

Shucking them from their envelope, he lined the pictures side by side on the bedspread in the sunlight. It took him a minute to understand what his eyes were looking at.

At first, they had looked like pictures of himself.

This one here, standing by the sedan in a dark suit. There was something about the dark cloth over long, muscled bones. Something suggestive in the posture. And *this* one. Himself, almost. In hiking breeches, a shabby hat cocked over rebellious hair. And the last one—Julie with her arm around this man who didn't look at all like Johnny Broghman but at the same time did.

It gave him a stunned feeling like having a body in two places at once. "I'll be damned," he said softly.

The door opened a few minutes later, while he was still looking. Julie's hard silhouette stood in a square of sunlight. There was just a flicker of surprise in her cheek muscles, then she shut the door, put one hand on a hip.

"Recognize yourself?"

"That isn't me."

"It's enough like you to make it worth a hundred grand if we work it fast. Worth a million if we stick it a couple years. Those pics were snapped when you were Boss-man of L.A. When you cleared twenty grand a month or you thought things stunk pretty badly."

He just sat there, waiting.

She stepped forward, slowly, her eyes full of funny, intense light. Her voice was like a sing-song prayer:

"Ricky Wolfe's not dead any more. He's back from the grave, in this room, now, sitting there, and he doesn't know it. He's going back. Back to L. A. to be Boss-man again." She stared down into his features, and her eyes were burning amber. "What do you think of that—*Ricky Wolfe?*"

He got it. He got what she meant and it was like a stiff kick in the teeth. He pulled back, yelling it:

"I know what you're thinking. It won't work!"

"Yes, it will. It *has* to!"

"You can't fool people! Stuff like that happens in dreams, in books. Nobody'd believe I was him. I don't look like him! We couldn't get away with it. It doesn't happen!"

"It happens to us, Ricky Wolfe! It happens to us!"

"Like hell it does." He started getting up.

She cracked him across the face, hard, three times. Her lips were shaking, her eyes almost insane.

"It happens to us!"

. . .

The new dark suit fitted like grafted skin. One side padded out a little; Ricky'd been built that way. Higher heels added altitude to Broghman. He learned talking with a faint lisp, chewing a cigar; but the thing that he said to Julie was:

"I keep telling you it won't work. I don't look like him. For a moment, yeah, if you look quick, if the light's bad, if you're half-blind. You're crazy. You want to kill us both!"

"Shut up!" she hissed. "Or I'll do the killing now."

He bit his cigar fiercely.

There were lists of facts, names, alibis to digest. Julie fed, crammed them down him. The leaves fell off the calendar like in a high wind. Then Julie, one day, elevated a stein of beer, yellow like her eyes and in a softer voice said:

"Tomorrow's the big day. L. A. here we come." She drank beer. "How's it feel to be Ricky Wolfe?"

His hand shook. He looked at his face mirrored, distorted in the brown hip of the half-emptied bottle. The cigar. The moustache. He wanted to blurt, "It won't work. An old gag like this won't fool people." But there was that look in her eyes, hot as boiling gold, so he shut up.

She was talking again, almost to herself. "I can't say what it was like, that noon at the bank. You standing there. Something about the way you stood, your face, like Ricky made up in a slightly new package. Lord, how it yanked my insides."

He thought it was a nice gesture, this next. He clinked his glass against hers. "Let's drink to our new life—together."

She got mad. "No," she snapped. "Let *me* say things like that. I keep telling you!"

Looking at her, trying to understand what ticked, queer, inside her red-hair, he sheepishly downed his beer.

. . .

It seemed right that she drove the car to L.A. all the way. It was a picture postcard day. She pressed the speed way up and kept it there when it was safe, her hair streaming like a scarlet banner. . . . They swerved corners to Spring Street and Third, parked the car, and walked—two dark suits reflected in shop windows—toward the bookie joint. He couldn't figure it out. It was crazy—but he was actually enjoying it.

Broghman knew the place from Julie's pungent description. A huge magazine shop smelling of ancient pulp magazines and old books in musty pyra-

mids; dimly lighted; slouched figures moving around in the dimness, phones jangling far back in the twenty aisles and hundreds of tables.

Back in that dusty place, where naked light bulbs hung dying in the high ceiling, the biggest horse racket in L. A. tucked away its profits and shilled its suckers.

The door to hell. Broghman felt his heart pounding. What if he forgot facts, figures, words, names—

Julie shoved him on. It took a moment for his eyes to adjust to the dark after sun. People's faces blurred in the gloom, and he was moving his hard heels rapping like knuckles, following the sullen red-head with the pendulum walk.

A lot of seated men jerked up, a lot of reading men stopped reading, a lot of talking men caught their tongues in their teeth, a lot of smoking men choked on their cigarettes. It was like flinging a boulder into a stagnant pond, watching ripples skim out and rush back:

"Ricky! For God's sake, fellas, it's him!"

"Ricky!"

"I'm seein' things!"

A sound of bodies stirring, shadows moving, and then one single voice saying:

"That's not Ricky Wolfe." And again, "That's not Ricky."

It was a flat statement.

Broghman felt his gun in his palm slip like a frightened animal. His breath hissed in his nostrils. In the silence that followed, he stopped dead still and there was only the sound of Julie's high heels tacking along the wooden floor and slowly, with a kind of frozen dread, coming to a halt, too.

Broghman turned. Out of the shadow a guy slipped who was too well-dressed for his own good. With a long white horse-face and red-rimmed, tired eyes and sweat on his cheeks. A sort of balding guy, whose features set off a trigger in Broghman's mind. Merritt. Julie'd given a description. Merritt, from the old days. One of Ricky's side-kicks, a jealous kind of gunsel. Merritt. The name clicked.

There was something in Julie's expression. Almost fear. It looked strange on her. Out of place. Lost. Lost and crying in the dark. Her hand crawled along her dark purse, vaguely.

Broghman knew it was no use. It was no use all along.

"That's right," somebody else agreed. "It ain't Ricky at all." The voice sounded awed, funny, disappointed in its surprise.

Merritt said, "What you trying to pull, wise guy? You and the red-head?"

Broghman's jaw stiffened.

"No," he admitted evenly. "No, I'm not Ricky."

He heard Julie's gasp. He continued:

"I'm not Ricky Wolfe. Not at all. I don't have to be him. I'm me. I'm myself! You, you Merritt, you don't count for beans!"

The darkness began to swim. Everybody was sort of held by Broghman's voice, waiting.

"You can't get away with an old trick like that," was Merritt's quick reply. "What are you—kids to try something like this?"

Broghman pulled his gun, and while the darkness got darker, and there was only Merritt in front of him, and the others waiting, he swore, tightened up and fired three shots.

Merritt folded over the bullets, taking them into him with curious, pushing, helpful fingers. He fell flat down on his head, choking.

"Ricky!" it was Julie's voice. He had a flash of the metal jaws of her purse flipping wide, her gloved hand burrowing like a white squirrel inside, extracting a little blue gun.

"I'm in!" said Broghman. There was a sort of power to the way he mouthed it. He sort of grew upward. He seemed to fit his suit better. Everybody else still stood, looking at his face, like they were seeing the devil and couldn't run away.

. . .

Broghman took in every face. Names, data, facts, figures that Julie'd given him. Here. One face, a fat red one with beer smelling from its lips. "Kelly!" he snicked it out, with a jerk of his gun. "You know what to do. Get moving with this body!"

"Sure, Boss!" Kelly moved his big stomach and big shoulders and fat, long arms.

Broghman glanced around. "You, Rhodes, help him. Get your car around in the alley, on the double."

Rhodes hesitated.

"Well?" asked Broghman.

"Sure," said Rhodes, hastily. "Sure, Boss."

Other shadows were becoming men now, taking the cue from the others. Someone grabbed Merritt's feet, someone else his arms; and there was a shuffling of running feet back through the dark little office, more orders, more swearing.

You keep people running so they don't have time to think. No time to get mad, thought Broghman. Keep them excited, keep their eyes fixed on something else, *then you fool them.*

It didn't take more than a minute for the body to vanish through the back door into the alley. A car roared outside. A small crowd gathered in the front door of the shop.

"Clear them away!" Broghman flipped his gun through the air. "Catch, Sammy," he told one of them. Sammy scuttled through the back office with the gun. To the others Broghman gave a brief going over. "Any of you want to pull out, pull now. Any of you don't like me, say so. I'm *in.*"

Kelly emerged from back, wheezing, mopping sweat off his huge pink face. "Everything's okay, Ricky." He caught himself. "I mean—" He groped for a name.

Broghman gave him one. "If it makes you feel better—call me Ricky, too."

Kelly felt better. He grinned. "Okay—Ricky. We always did get along, didn't we?" He stopped and thought about that. "Didn't we—almost—I guess—" He stood there.

There'd be a cop in a moment. Broghman shook his head, and he and Julie and Kelly went into the back office with two others. Before closing the door, he poked a finger at the young guy named Knight. "For the cops it was all a mistake. Nothing happened. You don't know anything."

He slammed the door hard. His hands began to shake so he hid them in his pockets.

Julie was just watching him, all this while, holding onto her purse, examining his face. "It happened," she said. "It happened when you shot Merritt."

"What?" he asked.

She didn't have to answer. A cracked mirror hanging on the dirty wall told him. He saw his eyes there, and shivered.

Out of the past he heard Julie's voice saying, "You're no killer. It's not in your face. Your eyes are open too wide for killing."

In the mirror, now, they were narrowed to hard slits.

Maybe there was more than one way to be like Ricky Wolfe. Maybe you didn't have to *look* like him. But you could act like him. The guts inside made the difference. And—the eyes.

He broke away from looking at himself. "Let's move. Brentwood. That's where my house is, the one with the swimming pool, huh, Julie?"

"Sure," she said, softly. "Sure it is."

"Come on, then. You too, Kelly. And you boys. Lots of work for us."

"Sure, Boss."

They meant a lot, those two words: "Sure, Boss."

They all went out together.

CHAPTER THREE

Guns Are Old-Fashioned

It was a big impressive house in Brentwood; you could fall in its swimming pool if you didn't watch out; the bathrooms had glass doors. It glittered.

Walking around the huge garden surrounding the place, Broghman figured how it had all worked, how Merritt had been an unpopular sort of guy, how Ricky's spot had been vacant, discounting Merritt, for weeks now following Ricky's death. Things hadn't jelled yet.

So a lot of guys had wanted Ricky back. When people want things bad enough, they get them. Even if they have to make-believe. So Broghman filled the part. He was near enough to the original, so they made him into a kind of duplicate of the

old boss. Something strictly from a psychological text. Something for mind doctors to kick around. Mob instinct, leader instinct, desire to put upon a pedestal. . . . What the hell. He was IN, now. That counted. No matter how a psychiatrist explained it—the wishful thinking, the acceptance of a new shape from the old mould, he was *in!*

But, seeing the house and the garden, now after all the excitement died down, he realized that it meant nothing to him. Not a thing. What in hell *did* he want then? What? Even, there was something about Julie. . . .

There had to be a party.

So Los Angeles could meet a guy named Broghman.

He bought a corsage for Julie for the party. He gave it to her in a cellophane box and watched her face change at sight of it. She twisted the box apart and tore the flower into pieces and dropped it on the floor:

"That's not what I want. I keep telling you. Don't give me anything like that."

She walked off.

He picked up the mashed flower, smelled it. It smelled all right. He shook his head.

• • •

The house was full of mist from cigarettes, coming and going in great nicotine fog-banks. Bottles rattled shapely glass hips one against another, champagne tumbled into glasses, everybody talked too much. It was Friday night. Merritt had been killed and taken away Wednesday. Broghman stood in the middle of the noise. This was the circus Julie ringmastered for him, so all the big lions could look at their new tamer, sit up, give a jealous greeting, shake hands maybe. Things were smooth. Julie saw to it that people who were small-time stayed on the outer fringe, while the big Joes got through. There were plenty of them—

"So they call you Ricky, too?"

This was an old man with white hair. Name of Vanning. Some sort of contact with one of the biggest lawyers. Soft pink face, long and intelligent looking, slightly wrinkled, constantly smoking imported cigars. "Like to see you after the party, Ricky," he said, softly.

"What about?"

Vanning chuckled a little. "We're surprised at your showing up, Ricky. We're respectable business men, yes we are. It's like having a ghost coming among us. But I must admit you were clever. Used a psychological trick. Very good."

"Keep talking."

"In spite of the fact that you showed some originality in the way you took Ricky Wolfe's place, you're still one of the old school gangsters. The kind of person who used to rob a bank with a gun—"

"What's wrong with that!"

"Unscientific. We're—business men. We do our work with hints, words, a little pressure here and there. Quiet transactions. We use psychology, too, but use

it all the time." The old man brushed back his soft white hair. "Now, listen to me, young man. From now on, criminality works behind a desk. It's been tending that way a long time, but now it's here to stay. Science prevents you from being out in the open any more. People won't stand for it."

"So what do we talk about after the party?"

"About you quieting down, my boy. You attract attention. You're old-fashioned, make too much noise."

"So I gotta change!"

"We can give you an office downtown—"

"I'm not made that way!"

The old man kept smiling, his eyes twinkling. "On occasion, if we are forced to, we can revert to old-fashioned gangsterism, too, let me tell you. We can kill you, legally, any time, and take credit for having done the public a service. See how clever we are?"

Broghman considered Vanning a moment, his heart pounding, his eyes narrowed down to hard slits.

Vanning looked at Broghman's eyes. "Hill Street and Sixth. The Leighton Building, after midnight."

"I'll think about it."

When Vanning walked away, Julie's face said "No," to Broghman, with an exclamation point after it. But liquor and self-power both were fogging his brain and he could hardly see her.

The rest of the party wasn't even a decent memory. It was blotted out by a kind of excitement, the same excitement that had followed him ever since he met Julie. It was like a big drum being pounded in his brain, louder and louder and louder.

The door slammed on the last of the departing guests. Julie held onto the doorknob, feeling it. All of the steel had poured out of her as if through a secret release. She was hardly a healthy cat animal any more. She trembled.

They padded upstairs together, through the suddenly quiet house, no words passing between them. They closed the door to her room and the first words that she said were:

"You're not going down tonight to see Vanning. He knows he can't handle you. He's afraid of you. So he'll kill you!"

He kissed her on her full, obstinate lips. She smelled fresh after the nicotine and liquor. He kissed her on the neck, the ears, the cheeks, and again on the lips, and she responded. It was a long kiss.

Her fingers bit into his arms.

"Oh, Ricky, Ricky," she gasped.

He let her go.

He fell back as if she had struck his face.

She put up her hand, as if to catch those words, but she was too late. She couldn't bring them back.

He just looked at her as if she were invisible and said:

"What did you say?"

"I didn't mean it."

"You said *Ricky!* You said it!"

. . .

Weakly, then, dazed, he repeated her words and then said, "You love him. You love a dead man. I should have guessed. You made me try to look like him, you risked your life on it. You made me look, walk, talk like him, so *he* could hold you again, so *he* could kiss you again, hurt you again!"

"Please . . . Johnny!"

His eyes were wide open again. "You don't love me. You tried to dig up Ricky out of the grave. I should have guessed when the gang acted the way it did at the magazine shop. They wanted Ricky back, too. They took a substitute for want of the real article. And all the other little things—"

He started groping for the door like a blind man. "You didn't want me to kiss you. *You* kissed *me.* That's the way it was with Ricky. You did things *for* him. When *I* did things, you resented it, you slapped me. It was off-key, off-character. It wasn't Ricky, it wasn't him at all. The flower I gave you, you didn't want. Ricky never gave flowers. And if I said nice things, you were angry—"

Julie got in front of the door, her breath hissing. "You can't go out! Vanning'll kill you."

"You afraid I'll get killed? Afraid *Ricky* will die again?"

He beat it at her, like fists, while his unfeeling hand sought the gun in its leather vest under his arm. "Afraid Ricky'll die again! Couldn't stand that, could you? Couldn't stand having him killed again!"

"No." She said the word so simply, so softly. "I couldn't stand it. I'm sorry, Johnny, but that's how it is."

She shook her head, as though trying to fight out of a dream. "Don't you see, Johnny? We're both the same. I'm not Julie. You don't want *me.* You want—your mother. Somebody you can cling to. Somebody to take care of you. The mother you never had, Johnny. And I—I want Ricky. We met in front of a bank, Johnny, you and I, and we both wanted something and we tried to get it and it fell apart in our faces." She gripped him, spoke convulsively, "Oh, Ricky, hold onto me tight—"

Ricky! The name was like an iron poked into his brain, stirring all the self-doubts and longings that wracked him. He didn't say anything, but what he was thinking through the liquor fog was, "I'm Johnny Broghman! I'm myself! Damn them—all of them, I don't need a woman to lean on. Not my mother, not Julie . . . not anybody. I'm Johnny Broghman—the strongest thing in the world."

He tried to push her away and she only clung tighter. Like a leech she was, feeding on his strength, trying to make him into somebody who wasn't Johnny Broghman. As if Johnny Broghman wasn't good enough. . . .

What his hands couldn't do, his gun did for him.

He didn't will it precisely. But there it was. His eyes were closed almost down, the Ricky way. His gun shot twice and knocked her back. He could feel her hands pull away from him, clinging to the last. She fell, sprawled, and lay unmoving on the floor.

He leaned against the door, swallowing, wiping at his eyes which were blurred. Then he went downstairs, the gun still in his hand. With every step he could feel himself growing stronger. Now he was free. He didn't need a woman to lean on, and now he had proved it.

He had killed twice and now he would kill again. The old man with the pink face, Vanning. The one who called himself a business man, and who thought he could make a desk punk out of Johnny Broghman. Vanning, who thought he could boss Johnny Broghman the way he had bossed Ricky Wolfe. Johnny Broghman was a better man than Ricky Wolfe had ever been. Julie had found that out.

Broghman opened the front door. . . . He got it before he had walked halfway down the drive to his car. Vanning's men, in the black car parked in the night shade of bulking trees, reached for him with tommy-guns. The line of bullets hit him and he folded over them like a man folds over an invisible wall.

The guns kept spitting long after Johnny Broghman slumped down like a little kid on the lawn to take his evening sleep. . . .

. . .

So that's Johnny Broghman's story, take it or leave it, with or without the benefit of the scalpel. It's all here on the slab.

Now, I'll take the heart of Johnny Broghman's and place it back inside the body where it never had a chance to love, but was only a guy in a cell. I'll put all of Johnny back inside himself where it belongs, all the agony and hatred and sullen burning flame of Johnny, back in upon himself in the cold cavern of the bullet-torn body, and I'll perform suture upon it with a needle and thread. Drop one, purl one, sewing Humpty-Dumpty back up again so they can bury him. I'll go on to other bodies, but I won't be able to write stories about them like Johnny's story. I won't be able to scalpel *those* brains apart, to know how the heart pulsed or the stomach turned in agony.

Johnny Broghman was my brother.

Hand me the suture, nurse.

Next!

FIFTEEN

THE LONG NIGHT

Outside the apartment house, all the guys came together, Gomez, Tony, The Baron, the Sandman de Califa and the others. Tony was hopping up and down socking my arm over and over, until I told him to stop or I'd knock the enchiladas out of him. Tony laughed with his mouth open so you could see his big, long white teeth, and he switched over to hitting the Baron on the arm. The Baron got tough and smacked Tony on the elbow, very hard. Tony yelled and pretended he was weaving fast punches at rum-soaked Sam.

It was the kind of night in October when things happen. When people get hurt and other people don't care. We were waiting around for Rudy Verdugos to show up. He was across the street where the juke music came out sounding just like the red, green, blue, purple lights look inside the plastic juker. We were jigging around, showing off our big pants and our tight cuffs and our orange *huaraches.* I had my new black shirt on.

"Hi." Verdugos came up with a big sport coat, black, draped over his body, which isn't more than a lot of picked chicken bones, really, but Verdugos is a hot brain, and is okay, because we like him.

"Rudy, Rudy, Rudy!" we all said together. He is older than us. He said, "Shut up," smiling. His face was thin like a rat and he had little needle teeth. "What's doin' with you guys?"

"We been waiting for you, Rudy," we said.

"Yeah?" he said. "Well, *look.*"

We looked at the brassies on his fist. "What is it?" someone wanted to know.

"Ah, you dumb," Tony said. "Why, them are brass knucks. For a good use."

"To hit them rioters with when they come around stripping clothes off us *pachucos,*" said Verdugos, very quiet, with a light in his eyes. "That's nothing. I got connections."

"Gee, Rudy," they said. I kept quiet, watching.

"Stick around me and make pin-money," Verdugos told them, not laughing at all.

Just then three drunks came by, singing loud, walking on down Temple

Street. Verdugos looked dark ugly after them. "Lousy gringoes," he said. "Let me tell you, there's gonna be trouble here tonight."

"Yeah," we said.

I said, "The papers say the *pachucos* at the water-front last night pulled a knife on a sailor."

"Don't believe them papers," snapped Verdugos, giving me a hot, shiny glare. "We got rights to live, ain't we?"

"Sure, sure, Rudy," we said, uneasily. I felt alone. Suddenly, I didn't know these guys. I didn't know nothing. Tony and Gomez and Verdugos and The Baron. With their hair combed back into black duck-feathers, shining.

Somebody screamed. Just like that. People began running around the three story tenement like cockroaches, and fire leaped up from the cellar. Red fingers of it, climbing up the old bleached dry boardings. I heard *Mamacita* screaming.

I yelled. I ran down the alley. "Okay, Mom, okay, Mom!"

Someone else yelled, "Call the fire house!"

I got a garden hose from somewhere. People ran around. Mama was down from the second floor screaming at me, "Freddie, Freddie, be careful! Ah, be careful!"

There was a hissing when the water smacked against hot wood.

I heard a siren way off and a moment later the big metal rumble as the engines arrived and firemen scrambled. I got out of the way and let real water pound through.

Verdugos and the other guys were standing out on the sidewalk, watching. Mama held on to me. "Ah," she cried, "there is someone caught down in the basement! A body!"

I held on to Mama. We tried to see through the smoke. The big hoses twisted in the vacant lot like a nest of big dying snakes. My guts felt the same way.

Five minutes later they brought the body up.

"Who is it!" On the first floor balcony, Fannie Florianna made a lot of noise with her heavy feet.

We could not tell who it was, even when the body lay in front of us, all wet, smoked and charred. The head was like charcoal.

The firemen emptied the pockets and read the name. It was Pesquarra, who made perfumed candles for Olvera Street.

Mama rocked on her heels beside me. "He had a wife and a child coming. And now he is dead. Oh."

I went down in the cellar. When things had cooled off, and the firemen were scraping around further in the cellar, off to one side, I went down into the burnt wetness. I choked on the smoke.

I found the iron door of the water-heater open, and a smell of burned flesh

and hair coming from inside it. From *inside.* It plugged my nose like a fist, hitting. I reached in and pulled out a clot of human hair, to hide in my pocket. The firemen were too busy yet to notice.

Up above, Pesquarra's wife had just seen him with his new face. The sound she made was like nothing ever made before.

I shivered. Someone had shoved Pesquarra head first into the water-heater. And then pulled him out and laid him somewhere else and started a fire. It looked just like an accident.

I threw water and ashes on the heater. I didn't know why or what I was doing. Then I staggered up the wet steps like a crazy hound.

"What's wrong?" cried Mama, her eyes all over me at once.

"Nothing," I said. "Leave me alone."

I hadn't gone looking for anything in particular. It was just that kind of thing. I was just curious.

. . .

I faded Mama out and found myself in the hall of the tenement. It smelled of cabbage and people. Pesquarra's room was easy to get into. I wondered how I found my way there through the fog.

I swayed.

I didn't know what I was looking for.

Pesquarra had left this room and wasn't worrying about paying the rent ever again. He had been such a quiet, nice guy. Never talking to nobody. Never wanting trouble. That's why I figured I might find something to tell me—

I switched on a light. There were perfumed candles stacked up in colored rows, and—

Somebody tossed a switch; the lights went out. I felt the hairs on my legs edge up into cold pimples. I slipped around a table that was a thousand miles wide. The door opened in the dark and someone stood there, waiting. I wasn't the only one who'd come to Pesquarra's room looking.

An animal always knows what to do when it's cornered. I knew, then, too. My voice didn't belong to me, hissing out:

"I got a knife. Don't come in. Get out!"

For just a moment that person there in the door waited. Then the door slammed. I heard footsteps run down the hall. I also thought I heard little bells tinkling.

I was in no hurry to follow. I leaned against the silence and let my perspiration out to dry.

The lights went back on. Another noise pulled me out of my searching before even five minutes had passed. On the street there was yelling. I got out of Pesquarra's room fast. I ran to the fire-escape and looked down.

Across the street where the music jumped out of the Lucky Spot, a man lay

on the sidewalk with red stuff on his head. Somebody had thrown something. A couple of other men were running silently and quickly down the street, following somebody who ducked away down an alley.

The fire engines were going away. Everybody in the tenement was out there, watching. Massinello Pietro and his dogs, with his colored shirt and the bells on it. Sam, drunk and thin and bleary-eyed. Gilbert Ramirez, all muscles and brute strength. Verdugos, thin like a rat. And the other kids. I wondered to myself which one of them had killed Pesquarra. And why.

Mama called me, loud and high as a time whistle.

I climbed upstairs for supper.

There is nothing like chili simmering and bubbling red on the kitchen stove. There is nothing like the table and a pyramid of enchiladas steaming and bottles of wine open, smelling ripe, and Mama yelling for us kids to come and eat.

We straddled our chairs and dished out the chili peppers, the beans, the pork, and grabbed our spoons. Everybody else stuffed. Except me and my brother Joe. He was standing over by the window looking down.

Mama looked at me. "Whatsa matter, Freddie?" She shoved the chili-beans at me. "Put some on your plate."

The chili looked like blood.

"Naw, Mom." I pushed back from the table, feeling sick. "What happened downstairs?"

"The firemen, they all go away, *sí*," said Mama, pleased.

Papa ate rapidly, his moustache working. "Not much damage, either. Except to Mr. Pesquarra. We must send flowers. Such an accident."

"Is that all it was?" I said.

"Sure. What else?"

"Nothing, I guess. What did the cops say?"

"They blamed the water-heater. Bad connection or something. Pesquarra was working on it. That's all."

I stiffened. I remembered how I'd thrown water and ashes all over the heater to cover the hair and flesh smells. I didn't even know why, except maybe to save Mrs. Pesquarra from knowing her husband was pushed into it first.

Joe was still standing silent by the window, looking down with his face like a pale cut cameo. A sad kind of face. He sang sad songs and played a guitar slow and well. I couldn't figure him out. I liked jazz tunes. Now when Mama complained to Joe about not eating, he said,

"There's going to be trouble tonight, *Mamacita.* Trouble all this week. I'm glad I'm no *pachuco!*"

"All right!" I sort of flushed in my ears and held my long black hair down with my fingers. "I'm no *pachuco!* Just because I like the guys!"

Joe studied me with a tall sadness. He was a quiet stranger in a loud house. "Let me catch you dressed in a zoot coat, and I'll take it off of you myself," he said.

"Be quiet, the two of you," said Papa. He jabbed his food. Mama went to Joe and looked out of the window with him. She said, "The mob . . . They come tonight, you think?"

"I don't know." Joe studied the street. "Not many. Mostly just ordinary rioters. People who like that sort of thing. There were five hundred rioters in Bell Gardens last night. They stripped ten *pachucos* naked and threw them in a garbage wagon. In some fights, people were hurt. It's not good for good Mexicans like us, *Mamacita.*"

"We'll beat their damn heads off!" I said, as red as the chili on the plates. "They got no right to pick on us because we dress different!"

"Freddie!"

I shut up, trembling. Then it came to me. Suddenly I got it. I spit it out. "Look," I said. "Look." I pulled the charred hair from my pocket and threw it on the table. "See what they did to Pesquarra!"

"What is it?" said Mama. She and Joe came together.

I told them what I had found. It was like turning out the light in the room. Mama's face whitened into bones and dark wet eyes very big, and fingers clenched before her teeth. Joe swallowed and Papa could not eat.

"Those rioters," I said, loud. "You see what they do! It was murder!"

"No, I will not believe this of them," sighed Mama.

Joe took the hairs into his palm, mouth tight. I let him think about it.

"They would not do that," said Mama. I was not sure. Funny how you say things, angry, that you don't really believe. It was something to say. It sounded almost right.

Joe said, "We must tell the police."

I got up. "No. I'd be held. It's my fault they didn't know Pesquarra was pushed into that heater head first. What good would it do to tell now? They wouldn't catch anybody."

"Excuse me," said Papa. He hurried out of the room onto the balcony, to get rid of his supper.

Mama sat down, heavily. "What is the world coming to? What shall we do?"

. . .

Papa came back and stood in the door, eyes running, face red. "There has been talk of Germans," he said slowly. "Trying to stir up these riots. Maybe Pesquarra had something to do with them. Maybe he knew things he should not have known. There have been no strangers around the tenement today. We must not rush our minds about it. Some of the *pachucos* may have killed him. We'll wait until morning—"

I slammed the door. I went down the stairs, picking my way through the dark, stained odors. I tried to get mad at the rioters, but that was all gone. Papa talked

right. Anybody who knew where Pesquarra's room was would not be a stranger. It would be someone from inside, like a termite. The person who had come and stood in Pesquarra's door. The guy I frightened away by yelling at him. That was the murderer.

Big feet came up the stairs toward me. A big-muscled body passed me. "Hi, Freddie." Gilbert Ramirez pounded on up. I looked after him, wondering. Him, I thought. Him, maybe?

The street was filled up to the brim with noise again. Through a hall window I saw the mob coming. About fifty guys, all about eighteen or nineteen, a few hustlers a bit older, all looking tough, a crowd of a couple hundred following them. It pulled the muscles on my stomach cold and made me mad, too. I knew what they were looking for.

I wanted to yell and sling a brick. The door to Fannie Florianna's room was wide open and every inch of it was filled with her big body. Her round pink face worried. "You better come in here and don't let them see you," she whispered quickly. A little voice from such a big woman. I went in.

Her astrological charts were spread all around her room in snow-drifts. Cockroaches flipped like tiddle-de-winks in the sink. There was a bed made up, never slept in in years. She always slept in the big chair, sitting.

Fannie shut the door. "My vibrations tell me there'll be great trouble tonight. Aries opposes Taurus and is conjugated with Gemini. That's fatal. Better go to bed early."

"I don't need your chart to tell that."

She waddled to her massive chair. "I knew things would happen all along," she confided, eyes closed. "There are so many things happening. And all for a cause."

I said nothing. I knew that she was made of ears. Two hundred and ninety of her pounds had gone into making big ears. The rest was animal shrewdness. People went around her, like planets around a sun. Everyone brought her food and flattered her, waited on her. The mice would even give her their cheese because she had something on them.

Somebody walked in the hall. I held my breath and listened. So did Fannie. Somebody stood outside the door in the long tunnel.

They rapped and Fannie said come in. The door opened with a little tinkle of copper bells. Massinello Pietro danced in with his bald head throwing light, his dogs yipping at his sandaled feet.

"Hallo, my queen!" he sang, bowing. He daintily placed a platter of salad dressing on the table. "For you, your majesty." I had to laugh. You could never tell where his acting left off and he began. He waited on Fannie, too, like everyone else did. Even me. I ran errands for her, because she caught me smoking once and would tell *Mamacita* if I didn't cooperate.

The little bells on Pietro's red shirt glittered, ringing in a musical fringe. I

stared. I remembered that whoever killed Pesquarra had run away from his room with a rush of bells. But Pietro was such a screwy little old man.

"I must take leave now," sang Pietro, waltzing with a dog in his arms. "I dance on Main Street with my phonograph to get money for the poor. Who are the poor? Me. I put grease on my cheeks and bells on my britches. I hope you like the salad!"

Florianna sighed at the closing door. "It's a wild world tonight." Her big bosom moved in a slow, mountainous rhythm. "All of this trouble between rioters and *pachucos.* You know, of course, that it started in this house?"

"Huh?" I said.

She closed her eyes, slyly. "You think all of this trouble just happened. Ah, no." She wagged a finger like a sausage. "Such things must be slapped to life, like slapping a new baby."

"Who's responsible?" I asked.

"I'm paid to keep my mouth shut. If you pay me a little bit, maybe I can pry it open somehow."

"Nuts," I said. "Is it Verdugos? He likes trouble."

"No. He's paid by others, perhaps. Others bigger and more secret than he is. Paid to say what he says, do what he does."

I said, "There's a rumor about Nazis causing the riots; is that it?"

She blinked lazily, like a hippo. "Maybe. Maybe lots of things. It's great fun knowing so much and telling so little."

"Oh, you talk lies!" I cried.

That got her. She bit. Chuckling, she poked a big hand down into the pocket of her dress. "You think I lie and have no proof? Look."

She pulled out a folded paper, and opened it. "Don't touch it," she warned me. "Stay where you are and look at this writing."

I looked and whistled low. "It's written in German!" I couldn't understand what it said. She hid it again, quick, inside her dress, and drew out something else. It was made of cloth. A swastika. She said:

"My astrological formulas help me. They tell me where to look, guided by the stars. I found this, and the paper, in *someone's* room!"

"Someone in this house?"

"Yes. You think the big Nazis live in this part of town? No. They drive by in big cars once in a while to see how their agents are doing, yes. They pay money to their poor agents. And the troublemaker is among us, acting, talking like everybody. Someone we know. Someone we see every day. I found these in his room according to my astrological predications."

"Whose room?" I cried, moving my hand out, quick.

Florianna clutched fat arms over the paper blubbering. "Keep away! You can't have these! I'll scream! I'll tell the police that I found the swastika and Nazi papers in your father's room, if you touch me!"

I pulled back and watched the Nazi insignia go down into the same hiding place the paper had gone to. All the trouble in the house, the tightness and festering and worry—all hidden in the secret paper she held. I stood glaring at her.

"How can you sit there while people are fighting on the streets over stuff like that?"

"What do I care for them?" she replied. "I've my own world here, and I'm in the middle of it. I don't care for the people outside. What've they done for me?" She leaned forward, smiling. "Of course, *if* you could get some money—"

. . .

There was no use talking. I turned around and held on to the doorknob, tight. I can stop the riots now, I thought. I can tell people the truth and they'll stop hating one another. Yeah. Or will they?

The fires are burning already. Maybe I'm too late to put them out.

I jerked the door open, said, "I'll be back with some money!" and stepped out and slammed the door. I was lying. I didn't have any money. I thought I heard footsteps moving away up the steps in the hall.

For the moment, the streets were quiet. I stood in the hall listening to that silence caused when the rioters moved on down toward town.

With all the darkness around me, I realized I was the only one who really *knew* Pesquarra had been murdered. Mom and Papa and Joe, they knew; but *I* was the one who stuck my nose in. Florianna knew, too, maybe, but that didn't help. I shivered. I ran quick down the hall in the dark. I stumbled over something, a body, and yelled. I picked myself up.

It was only Sam, smelling a little bit of rum, passed out on the floor, lying all dirty and old and wrinkled in his sleep.

I ran outside to stand by the street light. The house was suddenly too big and too dark. There were so many people in the house. And one of them knew all about the riots and made the *pachucos* start them. Florianna knew who it was.

Was it Pietro who sang and danced with his barking dogs? Maybe Pesquarra had found out that Pietro was a Nazi and threatened to tell the police and Pietro had shoved him into the burner. Or Verdugos? He was smart and quick and liked money. Or maybe Sam, who loved his drink too much? How about Gilbert Ramirez? So big and hulking and dumb, but maybe smart underneath it. . . .

The stone hit my shoulder.

I almost fell. The other stone missed me, whistling.

I ran.

Five rioters came after me. "There's one of those lousy *pachucos* who hit Pete!" they shouted.

I raced down the alley, ducked around a fence, ran across a yard, jumped another fence and lost the sound of them swearing and panting. I held myself behind a bush, waiting. My heart beat hot. I hung over in a crouch, swaying.

They hunted around like dark animals, but they couldn't smell me for all my garlic and all my chili, and they didn't hear my heart drumming, even though it filled my world up with noise.

They got tired of hunting after a while, and went away.

I picked my way back, later, over fences and through alleys. I stopped and listened. Far off, I heard feet running, people shouting. The riots were beginning to build up again. A couple blocks away.

I crept through the alley by the house.

Something made me stop by the steps going down into the burnt up cellar. I thought I saw something lying at the bottom.

It was Joe.

It was so easy to find him. It was so easy to know he wouldn't argue with me again. Joe lay there, crumpled up, a gash across his skull with blood clotting it.

I fell down on my knees and grabbed him.

"Joe! Joe!" I said. Oh, God, the world went crazy. I was in the middle of things and I didn't have a side to be on. It all hit me like an earthquake shaking me. Joe had come down to the cellar to see if what I'd said about Pesquarra was true. And the murderer had seen him prowling and killed him, afraid that Joe would call the cops.

It would look like the rioters had done it. Just another accident. Just one of those things. Just like Pesquarra. Burned because he knew too much about riots. And Joe—killed—because I had poked my nose in the wrong hole. Nobody would be held for his death.

And how about me?

Someone who ran through the house on quiet feet, someone who was waiting around now to get me and finish me. It would make good headlines for tomorrow's morning papers. It would add gasoline to the fire, make people all the madder.

I had found a side to be on at last. Joe told me without a word, lying there. He told me which side was the right side. Not Verdugos and his gang of guys following him just because he said so. They didn't think. They had air in their heads, nothing else. They didn't know what they were doing, helping Nazis.

I touched Joe's hand. "I'm with you, Joe. Honest, I am. I'm sorry we ever argued. Oh, God, honest I am, Joe. I wish I'd never told you—"

I got up. I climbed the back steps angrily and I didn't know where I was going except that I found my hand twisting the door to Fannie Florianna's room. She knew everything. In a cold anger, gritting my teeth hard, making fists, I would force her to tell me who was responsible for Joe. I'd get it out of her, if I had to kill her—

I opened the door to her room and I turned colder.

This was easier. Easier than finding Joe.

Florianna lay upon her back in the middle of the floor, her face chalked white and blue. A doctor would say that she died of heart failure.

I didn't much bother to see if the Nazi insignia and the Nazi paper were gone. They were.

Standing over her, I figured it out. I looked at her bed. She hadn't slept in it for years. She couldn't lie down; she was so fat she couldn't breathe lying down.

Someone had come in, pushed her over on the floor and held her in a prone position.

That's all they had to do. No fighting, no strangling, no clubs, no bullets. Just hold Fannie Florianna down until her fat strangled her and her pink moon face turned blue.

Another accident. All very neat, all very well done. Three murders, and all looking like accidents.

Now, there was only me left.

. . .

Upstairs, on the second floor, I heard a dial phone ticking. I opened the door very quiet and listened. I heard a voice whispering. I caught only a few words:

"Police, yes . . . Send a squad car. There's a body in the alley. Rioters, yes—"

Jumping up the steps three at a time, I didn't care if I made noise.

When I reached the pay-phone the receiver was swinging back and forth in a pendulum. Someone ran down the hall. I yelled after that passing shadow. There were twenty doors it could have gone in, and three flights of steps. The shadow got away.

I went back to the phone and hung it up.

At that moment, I knew. I knew who had killed Pesquarra. I knew who the Nazi was, and how clever he'd been to cover himself up. First, Pesquarra. Then—Joe. Then—Florianna.

And now—me.

The murderer had it all worked out nice.

They came up the stairs, the mob. They caught me before I could get away. There were about twenty of them. They looked like high-school or college kids who were out for the excitement.

"Get the damn *pachuco!*"

"Any more in this house? Drag them out!"

"Rap on all the doors! Go in and get 'em!"

"Hey, you in there, open up!"

They pulled me down stairs and out onto the street. It was all lights. Hundreds of cars lined up, lights glaring. Streetcars held up by thick traffic, and a thousand people milling around like a spring flood, talking, waiting, and yelling when they saw me dragged out.

The murderer had told them there was a *pachuco* in the house and they had come to get me. The murderer was in the crowd, too, now, mingling, waiting, shifting around. I tried to see.

I fought. I kicked out and swung my fists. I screamed myself hoarse. They hit my teeth and my lips bled and puffed out, and I tried to say, "Wait—I'm on your side, now! Take my clothes, leave me alone, but let me call the police! I know who killed my brother! It's about the Nazis! You don't know. Oh, God, make them let me go!"

But there was so much noise. Horns tooting, kids crying, streetcars clanging, whistles blowing, and the crowd pressing in to see what a real live *pachuco* looked like having his guts kicked out of him. I was thrust around from person to person, in a dizzy circle. I fell down and somebody kicked me in the stomach. I crouched and someone threw a stone that hit my back. I crawled back against the wall and another stone hit my leg. They jeered. *I'm on your side, I thought. Please, let me be on your side!*

Sometimes they won't let you change sides in a war.

The police came. A squad car roared up, sirens full, blasting the echoes from all the buildings.

The mob broke back to let them run through. In all the confusion I got myself free and headed for the alley. Someone got in my way and I hit him crazily with my numb fist and he went down. I made it, sobbing. My clothes were ripped, I tasted blood as I ran, and I saw Joe lying there, still, waiting for the morgue, and I kept running on a treadmill of nightmares. I fell over a fence and crawled behind some thick bushes, lay with my face in the dirt. . . .

It was almost midnight before the police had chased the street clean and wide and empty again. Sirens whimpered back and forth.

They came and took Joe away. I heard Mama scream. I jerked, like hooks were in my lungs, ripping. *Oh, Mama, if I could hold your head now. If only I had not told Joe, he would be alive.*

But I could not go to her, yet. There was a job to be done. The night was only half through and I was not finished with it. I staggered up, and I went back through the silent areaways and I met nobody. I walked into the Lucky Spot juke joint. I stood in the door. The bartender looked up and saw me.

"Stay way from here, kid," he warned me, not liking my torn clothes. "You're under-age, and the police'll be around." I could hardly hear him. I was looking at all the people in the booths.

Verdugos was there with a blonde woman, beer on the table in front of them. Verdugos was laughing.

Sam was there, blowsy-eyed and thin, his unshaven face covered with sweat. He was pouring himself a drink of rum, standing at the bar.

Massinello Pietro was there with his little bells and his dogs sitting on the ta-

ble lapping a puddle of liquor, his bright shirt rattling. The bells jangled a merry tune that wasn't merry. The juke box was blatting *La Compañero.*

I stood there.

Gilbert Ramirez was there, big and dumb looking, and drunk. The whole place sort of pulsed like a cut in your arm that festers and begins to ache.

I looked at Verdugos and saw what he was drinking. Beer.

I looked at Massinello Pietro. He never drank. He just sang and danced and acted nuts.

Sam was drinking rum, like always. A special kind of rum, nobody else ever drank.

The music stopped and I hung there like a fly in a web. Sweat trickled down my cheeks and I blinked my eyes to clear things up.

Sam turned around and shambled over and put a nickel in the juke-box slide. He didn't push it in. Blearily, he looked at the twenty-four numbers to pick a tune. I waited. Then I walked up to about six feet behind him and I said, "Sam."

He turned around.

"You drink rum, Sam," I said.

"Sure, I drink rum," he said.

"You're the only one I know around here who drinks rum."

His eyelids twitched. I felt everybody in the room looking at me, holding me with their liquor eyes. "Sure," said Sam, "I drink rum. So what?"

I swallowed and bit my lips. "So, before that last riot you called the police."

Sam looked from side to side.

. . .

I told him. "You were pretty clever. Everybody thought you were just a stumble-bum, a wino, a lousy old ginker of liquor. A good set-up. Nobody would suspect an old wino. Now, a guy like Verdugos, he *looks* dishonest. But a guy like you, no. No!"

"You kidding?" But he was uneasy.

"Shut up. Let me finish," I said. "You called the police and told them there was a body—Joe—my brother. You phoned the cops, to be sure the rioters were blamed. Then you got downstairs again by the back way, and the mob was coming back again so you sicced them upstairs to where they could find another damn' *pachuco!* Me! You're a murderer, Sam!"

"You can't prove that, you can't blame me, you can't, by hell!"

I could hardly speak. "When you talked, Sam, you left little pieces of spit inside the receiver. Everybody does that, when they talk. They make the mouthpiece wet. But you made it smell of rum, Sam! The only person in the house who drinks rum!"

Sam's face was ugly. "That don't prove nothing. Why should I kill Joe?"

"Pesquarra," I said. "He was the first one. He threatened to tell the cops about you and the Nazis—how you made trouble between races—you had plenty of reason to kill him. I was in his room when you came to see if he'd left any evidence against you. You swiped one of Pietro's shirts with bells on it, so if you were heard it would sound like Pietro prowling. Then—you had to get rid of me. You saw Joe prowling around down by the water-heater. You knew I'd told him. So you killed Joe and told the police the mob had done it . . . ."

Sam moved and I jerked my fist.

"You stopped Joe and at the same time you made it look like yet more rioting. That was your job from the beginning. Kill a Mexican and make Mexicans mad. Then maybe kill a white person to make whites mad at Mexicans. Riot propaganda. Joe was dead."

The bartender started coming around the bar to break it up. I said:

"Then you eliminated Florianna because you were afraid me or the cops might make her spill. So you pushed her over and she couldn't breathe, and she died. Another accident, that's all."

I took a deep breath. "So now that left only me, prowling the house. You tried to use me like you used Joe, so the Nazis could burn up the whole city with riots, white against dark. Only I got away, Sam, only I got away and you made the mistake of leaving rum-smell in the phone receiver! So now we know what you are, Sam. All those people dead just for that. Three people dead just for that, Sam. Was it worth the money? Was it—"

Sam snatched into his shirt, inside his jacket, and started pulling something out. He'd had one drink too many. I got my knife first. I swung just as Sam fired his gun. His bullet knocked the plate glass window crashing.

Sam choked, looked at the knife sticking in his thin chest, wondering what it was doing there. He didn't seem to feel any pain.

Sam bent over a little, trying to grasp the knife. He dropped his gun rattling on the floor. Everybody watched as he choked; fell back against the juke box. His body pushed the coin slide in so it clicked. The mechanism began spinning—

Sam slid down the side of the juke to the floor, not speaking, a stream of blood pouring from his lips.

Somebody was calling the police. I stood there, shivering, beginning to cry for my Mama.

Loud and hard, the juke-box blatted out.

It should have sounded gay in the silence.

It didn't.

. . .

And now I'm lying here in my bed, high in the tenement. Tomorrow is Joe's birthday. He would have been twenty-one. I lie here, listening to the water drip-

ping from a faucet that I cannot turn off because it is only my heart beating over and over, drop by drop.

And a music comes in my room. Over and above the sound of my heart, there comes the music I cannot forget.

It is the music that came out of that juke-box, ten seconds after Sam was bleeding on the floor. The music that he paid for with his German nickel that went on playing as loud as thunder, alive long after Sam was dead.

I cannot smash that record. Oh, *madre mía,* I alone cannot smash that record!

SIXTEEN

LAZARUS COME FORTH

Logan's way of laughing was bad.

"There's a new body up in the air-lock, Brandon. Climb the rungs and have a look."

Logan's eyes had a green shine to them, eager and intent. They were ugly, obscene.

Brandon swore under his breath. This room of the Morgue Ship was crowded with their two personalities. Besides that, there were scores of cold shelves of bodies freezing quietly, and the insistent vibration of the coroner tables, machinery spinning under them. And Logan was like a little machine that never stopped talking.

"Leave me alone." Brandon rose up, tall and thinned by the years, looking as old as a pocked meteor. "Just keep quiet."

Logan sucked his cigarette. "Scared to go upstairs? Scared it might be your son we just picked up?"

Brandon reached Logan in about one stride, and while the Morgue Ship slipped on through space, he clenched the coroner's blue uniform with the small bones inside it and hung it up against the wall, pressing inward until Logan couldn't breathe. Logan blew air, his eyes looked helpless. He tried to speak and could only grunt like a stuck pig. He waved his short arms, flapping.

Brandon kept him there, crucified on a fist.

"I told you. Let me search for my own son's body in my own way. I don't need your tongue."

Logan's eyes were losing their shine, were getting blind and glazed. Brandon stepped back, releasing the little assistant. Logan bumped softly against metal flooring, his mouth hungry for air, his nostrils flaring for breath. Brandon watched the little face of Logan over the crouched, gasping body, with red color and anger shooting up into it with every passing second.

"Coward!" he threw it out of himself, Logan did. "Got yellow—neon-tubing—for your spine. Coward. Never went to war. Never did anything for Earth against Mars."

Brandon said the words in slow motion. "Shut up."

"Why?" Logan crept back, inching up the metal hull. The blood pumps under the skirts of the tables pulsed across the warm silence. "Does it hurt, the truth? Your son'd be proud of you, okay. Ha!" He coughed and spat. "He was so damn ashamed of you he went and signed up for space combat. So he got lost from his ship during a battle." Logan licked his lips very carefully. "So, to make up for it, you signed on a Morgue Ship. Try to find his body. Try to make amends. I know you. You wouldn't join the Space Warriors to fight. No guts for that. Had to get a nice easy job on a Morgue Ship—"

Lines appeared in Brandon's gaunt cheeks, his eyes were closed, the lids pale. He said, and tried to believe it himself, "Someone has to pick up the bodies after the battle. They can't go flying on forever in their own orbits. They deserve burial."

The bitterness of Logan struck even deeper. "Who are you tryin' to convince?" He was on his feet now. "Me, it's different. I got a right to running this ship. I was in the other war."

"You're a liar," Brandon retorted. "You hunted radium in the asteroids with a mineral tug. You took this Morgue Ship job so you could go right on hunting radium, picking up bodies on the side."

Logan laughed softly, but not humorously. "So what? Least I'm no coward. I'll burn anybody gets in my way." He thought it over. "Unless," he added, "they give me a little money."

Brandon turned away, feeling ill. He forced himself to climb up the rungs toward that air-lock, where that fresh body lay, newly still-born from space by the retrieving-claw. His palms left wet shining prints on the rungs. His climbing feet made a soft noise in the cold metal silence.

The body lay in the cold air-lock's center, as thousands had lain before. Its posture was one of easy slumber, relaxed and not speaking ever again.

. . .

Brandon took in his breath. Numbly he realized it was not his son. Every time a new body was found he feared and yet hoped it would be Richard. Richard of the easy laughter and good smile and dark curly hair. Richard who was now floating off somewhere toward some far eternity.

Brandon's eyes dilated. He went to his knees and with efficient darts of his eyes, he covered the vital points of this strange uniform with the young body inside it. His heart pounded briefly, and when he got up again he acted like he had been struck in the face. He walked unsteadily to the rungs.

"Logan," he called down the hole in a numbed voice. "Logan, come up here. Quick."

Logan climbed lazily up, emitting grunts and smoke.

"Look here," said Brandon, kneeling again by the body.

Logan looked and didn't believe it. "Where in the hell'd you get that?"

Lying there, the face of the body was like snow framed by the ebon-black of the hair. The eyes were blue jewels caught in the snow. There were slender fingers reclining against the hips. But, most important of all, was the cut of the silver metal uniform, the grey leather belt and the bronze triangle over the silent heart with the numerals 51 on it.

Logan held onto the rungs. "Three hundred years old," he whispered it. "Three hundred years old," he said.

"Yes." The numerals 51 were enough for Brandon. "After all these centuries, and in perfect condition. Look how calm he is. Most corpse faces aren't—pretty. Something happened, three hundred years ago, and he's been drifting, alone, ever since. I—" Brandon caught his breath.

"What's wrong?" snapped Logan.

"This man," said Brandon, wonderingly, "committed suicide."

"How do you figure?"

"There's not a mark of decompression, centrifugal force, disintegrator or ray-burn on him. He simply *stepped* out of a ship. Why should a Scientist of the 51 Circle commit suicide?"

"They had wars back there, too," said Logan. "But this is the first time I ever seen a stiff from one of them. It can't happen. He shoulda been messed up by meteors."

A strange prickling crept over Brandon. "When I was a kid, I remember thumbing through history books, reading about those famous 51 Scientists of the Circle who were doing experimental work on Pluto back in the year 2100. I memorized their uniforms, and this bronze badge. I couldn't mistake it. There was a rumor that they were experimenting with some new universal power weapon."

"A myth," said Logan.

"Who knows? Maybe. Maybe not. But before that super weapon was completed, Earth fell beneath Mar's assault. The 51-Scientists destroyed themselves and their Base when the Martians came. The—myth—says that if the Martians had been only a month later—the weapon would have been out of blueprint and into metal."

Brandon stopped talking and looked at the long-boned, easily slumbering Scientist.

"And now he shows up. One of the original 51. I wonder what happened? Maybe he tried to reach Earth and had to leap into space to escape the Martians. Logan, we've got history with us, pulled in out of space, cold and stark under our hands."

Logan laughed uneasily. "Yeah. Now, if we only had that weapon. Baby, that'd be something to sing about, by God."

Brandon jerked.

Logan looked at him. "What's eating you?"

Brandon laid his fingers on the dead Scientist's skull.

"Maybe—just maybe—we *have* got the weapon," he said.

His hand trembled.

. . .

The coroner pumps throbbed warmly under the table, while manipulating tendrils darted swiftly, effectively over the dead Scientist's body. Brandon moved, too, like a machine. In a regular fury he had forced Logan to hurry the body down into the preparations room, inject adrenalin, thermal units, apply the blood pump and accomplish a thousand other demanding and instantaneous tasks.

"Now, out of the way, Logan. You're more trouble than help!"

Logan stumbled back. "Okay, okay. Don't get snotty. It won't work. I keep telling you. All these years."

Brandon could see nothing. Logan's voice was muffled, far away. There was only the surge of pumps, the sweating heat of the little cubicle, and niche number 12 waiting to receive this body if he failed. Brandon swallowed, tightly. Niche number 12 waiting, cold, ready, waiting for a body to fill it. He'd have to fight to keep it empty.

He began to sing-song words over and over as he injected stimulants into the body. He didn't know where the words came from, from childhood, maybe, from his old religious memories:

"Lazarus come forth," Brandon said softly, bending close, adjusting the manipulatory tendrils. "Lazarus, come forth."

Logan snorted. "Lazarus! Will you can that!"

Brandon had to talk to himself. "Inside his brain he's got that energy weapon that Earth can use to end the war. It's been frozen in there three hundred years. If we can thaw it out—"

"Who ever heard of reviving a body after that long?"

"He's perfectly preserved. Perfectly frozen. Oh, God, this is Fate. I know it. I feel it. Came to find Richard and I found something bigger! Lazarus! Lazarus, come forth from the tomb!"

The machines thrummed louder, beating into his ears. Brandon listened, watched for just one pulse, just one beat, one word, one moment of life.

"Air for the lungs," and Brandon attached oxygen cones over the fine nose and relaxed lips. "Pressure on the ribs." Metal plates pressuring the rib case slowly out and in. "Circulation." Brandon touched the control at the foot of the table and the whole table tilted back and forth in a whining teeter-tauter.

A report clipped through on the audio:

"Morgue Ship. Battle Unit 766 calling Morgue Ship. Off orbit of Pluto 234CC, point zero-two, off 32, one by seven, follow up. Battle just terminated.

Six Martian ships destroyed. One Earth ship blasted apart and bodies thrown into space. Please recover. 79 men. Bodies in orbit heading toward sun at 23,456 miles an hour. Check."

Logan flipped his cigarette away. "That's us. We got work to do. Come on. Let that stiff cool. He'll be here when we come back."

"No!" Brandon fairly shouted it, eyes wild. "He's more important than all those men out there. We can help them later. He can help us now!"

The table came to a halt, bringing absolute silence.

Brandon bent forward to press his ear against the warmed rib-casing.

"Wait."

There it was. Unbelievably, there it was. A tiny pulse stirring like a termite down under, softly and sluggishly moving through the body, jabbing the heart and—NOW! Brandon cried out. He was shaking all over. He was setting the machine in operation again, and talking and laughing and going crazy with it.

"He's alive! He's alive! Lazarus has come from the tomb! Lazarus reborn again! Notify Earth immediately!"

• • •

At the end of an hour, the pulse was timing normal, the temperature was lowering down from a fever, and Brandon moved about the preparations room watching every quiver of the body's internal organs through the tubular-fluoroscope.

He exulted. This was having Richard alive again. It was compensation. You roared into space looking somewhere for your lost self-respect, your pride, looking for your son who is shooting on some soundless orbit into nothing, and now the biggest child of Fate is deposited in your arms to warm and bring to life. It was impossible. It was good. Brandon almost laughed. He almost forgot he had ever known fear of death. This was conquering it. This was like bringing Richard back to life, but even more. It meant things to earth and humanity; things about weapons and power and peace.

Logan interrupted Brandon's exultant thinking by blowing smoke in his face. "You know something, Brandy? This is damn good! You done something, Mister. Yeah."

"I thought I told you to notify Earth."

"Ah, I been watching you. Like a mama hen and her chick. I been thinking, too. Yeah." Logan shook ashes off his smoke. "Ever since you pulled in this prize fish, I been turning it over in my mind."

"Go up to the radio room and call Earth. We've got to rush the Scientist to Moon Base immediately. We can talk later."

There was that hard green shine to Logan's narrow eyes again. He poked a finger at Brandon. "Here's the way I get it. Do we get rewarded for finding this

guy? Hell, no. It's our routine work. We're *supposed* to pick up bodies. Here we got a guy who's the key to the whole damn war."

Brandon's lips hardly moved. "Call Earth."

"Now, hold on a moment, Brandy. Let me finish this. I been thinking, maybe the Martians'd like to own him, too. Maybe they'd like to be around when he starts talking."

Brandon made a fist. "You heard what I said."

Logan put his hand behind him. "I just want to talk peaceable with you, Brandy. I don't want trouble. But all we'll get for finding this stiff is a kiss on the cheek and a medal on the chest. Hell!"

Brandon was going to hit him hard, before he saw the gun in Logan's fingers, whipped out and pointing.

"Take a look at this, Brandy, and don't lose your supper."

In spite of himself, Brandon quailed. It was almost an involuntary action. His whole body plunged back, aching, pulling with it.

"Now, let's march up to the radio room. I got a little calling to do. Get on with you. Hup!"

In the radio-room, Logan touched studs, raised a mike to his lips and said:

"Beam to Mars. Beam to Mars. Morgue Ship of Earth calling. Mars Beam answer."

After an interval, Mars gave answer. Logan said:

"I've just picked up the body of a 51 Circle Scientist. He's been resuscitated. Give me your fleet commander. I got things to talk over with him." Logan smiled. "Oh, *hello,* commander!"

. . .

Half an hour later, the discussions were over, the plans made. Logan hung up, satisfied. Brandon looked at him as if he couldn't believe he was serious.

Back down in the control room, Logan set a course, and then forced Brandon to get the body ready. He bragged about the deal. "A half ton of radium, Brandy. Not bad, eh? Good pay. More than Earth'd ever give me for my routine duty."

Brandon shuddered. "You fool. The Martians will kill us."

"Uh-uh." Logan pantomimed him into moving the body onto a rollered table and taking it to the emergency life-craft air-lock. "I'm not that dumb. I'm having you wire this emergency life-boat with explosive. We collect the minerals first. We blow up the body if the Martians act funny. We make them wait until we've collected our half and gotten five hours' start toward Earth before we allow them to pick up the body. Nice, huh?"

Brandon swayed over the task of wiring the lifeboat with explosive. "You're cutting your own throat. Handing over a weapon like that to the Martian enemy."

It was no again from Logan. "After the Martians pick up the body and we're safely on our way home to Earth, I press a button and the whole damn thing blows up. They call it double-crossing."

"Destroy the body?"

"Hell, yes. Think I want a weapon like that turned over to the enemy? Guh!"

"The war'll go on for years."

"So Earth'll wind up winning, anyhow. We're getting along, slow but sure. And when the war's over, I got a load of radium to set myself up in business and a big future in front of me."

"So you kill millions of men, for that."

"What'd they do for me? Ruined my guts in the last war!"

There had to be some argument, something to say, quick, something to do to a man like Logan. Brandon thought, quickly. "Look, Logan, we can work this, but save the body."

"Don't be funny."

"Put one of the *other* bodies in the ship we send out. Save Lazarus' body and run back to Earth with it!" insisted Brandon.

The little assistant shook his head. "The Martians'll have an intra-material beam focused on the emergency ship when they get within one hundred thousand miles of her. They'll be able to tell then if the Body's dead or alive. No dice, Brandy."

It was hardly like leaping himself, thought Brandon. It was just frustration and rage and unthinking action. Brandon jumped. Logan hardly flicked an eyelid as he pressed the trigger of his paragun. It paralyzed the legs from under Brandon and he collapsed. The gun sprayed over his groin and chest and face, too, in a withering shower of red-hot needles. The lights went out.

. . .

There was a loose sensation of empty space, and acceleration minus power. Pure soundless momentum. Brandon forced his eyes open painfully, and found himself alone in the preparations' room, lying stretched upon one of the coroner tables, bound with metal fibre.

"Logan!" he bellowed it up through the ship. He waited. He did it again. "Logan!"

He fought the metal fibre, knotting his fists, twisting his arms. He yanked himself back and forth. It pretty well held, except for a looseness in the right hand binding. He worked on that. Upstairs, a queer, detached Martian bass voice intoned itself.

"500,000 miles. Prepare your emergency craft with the body of the Scientist inside of it, Morgue Ship. At 300,000 miles, release the emergency craft. We'll

release *our* mineral payment ship now, giving you a half hour leeway to pick it up. It contains the exact amount you asked for."

Logan's voice next:

"Good. The Scientist is alive, still, and doing well. You're getting a bargain."

Brandon's face whitened, bringing out all the hard, scared bones of it, the cheeks and brow and chin bones. He jerked against the binding and it only jumped the air from his lungs so he sobbed. Breathing deeply, he lay back. They were taking his child back out into space. Lazarus, his second son, whom he had birthed out of space with a metal retriever, they were taking back out and away from him. You can't have your real son; so you take the second best and you slap him into breathing life, into breathing consciousness, and before he is a day old they try to tear him away from you again. Brandon fairly yelled against his manacles of wire. Sweat came down his face, and the stuff from his eyes wasn't all sweat.

Logan tiptoed down the hard rungs, grinning.

"Awake, Sleeping Beauty?"

Brandon said nothing. His right hand was loosened. It was wet and loosened, working like a small white animal at his side, slipping from its wire trap.

"You can't go ahead with it, Logan."

"Why not?"

"The Earth Tribunal will find out."

"You won't tell them." Logan was doing something across the room. He was the only moving thing in front of a hundred cold shelves of sleeping warriors.

Brandon gasped, tried to get up, fell back. "How'll you fake my death?"

"With an injection of sulfacardium. Heart failure. Too much pulse on a too old heart. Simple." Logan turned and there was a hypodermic in his hand.

Brandon lay there. The ship went on and on. The body was upstairs, lying breathing in its metal cradle, mothered by him and jerked to life by him, and now going away. Brandon managed to say:

"Do me a favor?"

"What?"

"Give me the drug now. I don't want to be awake when you send Lazarus out. I don't want that."

"Sure." Logan came walking across the deck, raising the hypodermic. It glittered hard and silver fine, and sharp.

"One more thing, Logan."

"Hurry it up!"

Only one arm free, one leg able to move slightly. Logan pressing against the table, now. The hypodermic hesitated in his fingers.

"This!" said Brandon.

. . .

With one foot, Brandon kicked the teeter-tauter control at the base of the board. The board, whining, began to elevate swiftly. With his free arm, instantly pulling the last way free from the wire, Brandon clutched Logan's screaming head and jammed it down under the table, under the descending board. Board and metal base ground together and kept on going three inches. Logan screamed only once. The sounds after that were so horrible that Brandon retched. Logan's body slumped and hung, arms slack, hypo dropped and shattered on the deck.

The whole table kept going up and down, up and down.

It made Brandon sicker with each movement. The whole room revolved, tipped, spun sickishly. The corpses in all their niches seemed to shiver with it.

He managed to kick the control to neutral and the table poised, elevated at the heels, so blood pounded hotly into Brandon's pale face, lighting, coloring it. His heart was pounding furiously and the chronometer upon the hull-wall clicked out time passing, time passing and miles with it, and Martians coming so much the closer. . . .

He fought the remaining wires continuously, cursing, bringing threads and beads of blood from raw wrist, ankle and hips. Red lights buzzed like insects on the ceiling, spelling out:

"ROCKET COMING . . . UNKNOWN CRAFT . . . ROCKET APPROACHING . . ."

Hold on, Lazarus. Don't let them wake you all the way up. Don't let them take you. Better for you to go on slumbering forever.

The wire on his left wrist sprang open. It took another five minutes to bleed himself out of the ankle wires. The ship spun on, all too quickly.

Not looking at Logan's body, Brandon sprang from the table and with an infinite weariness tried to speed himself up the rungs. His mind raced ahead, but his body could only sludge rung after rung upward into the radio room. The door to the emergency rocket boat was wide and inside, living quietly, cheeks pink, pulse beating softly in throat, Lazarus lay unthinking, unknowing that his new father had come into his presence.

Brandon glanced at his wrist chronometer. Almost time to slam that door, shoving Lazarus out into space to meet the Martians. Five minutes.

He stood there, sweating. Then, decided, he put a tight audio beam straight on through to green Earth. Earth.

"Morgue Ship coming home. Morgue Ship coming home! Important cargo. Important cargo. Please meet us off the Moon!"

Setting the ship controls into an automatic mesh, he felt the thundering jets explode to life under him. It was not alone their shaking that pulsed through his body. It was something of himself, too. He was sick. He wanted to get back to Earth so badly he was violently ill with the desire. To forget all of war and death.

He could give Lazarus to the enemy and then turn homeward. Yes, he sup-

posed he could do that. But, give up a second son where you already have given up one? No. No. Or, destroy the body now? Brandon fingered a ray-gun momentarily. Then he threw it away from him, eyes closed, swaying. No.

And if he should try to run away to Earth now? The Martians would pursue and capture him. There was no speed in a Morgue Ship to outdistance superior craft.

Brandon walked unsteadily to the side of the sleeping Scientist. He watched him a moment, touching him, looking at him with a lost light in his eyes.

Then, he began the final preparations, lifting the Scientist, going toward the life rocket.

. . .

The Martians intercepted the emergency life-rocket at 5199CVZ. The Morgue Ship itself was nowhere visible. It had already completed its arc and was driving back toward Earth.

The body of Lazarus was hurried into the hospital cubicle of the Martian rocket. The body was laid upon a table, and immediate efforts were made to bring it out of its centuries of rest.

Lazarus reclined, silver uniform belted across the middle with soft mouse-grey leather, bronze symbol 51 over the heart.

Breathlessly, the Martians crowded in about the body, probing, examining, trying, waiting. The room got very warm. The little purple eyes blinked hot and tensed.

Lazarus was breathing deeply now, sighing into full aware life, Lazarus coming from the tomb. After three hundred years of avoiding death.

Armed guards stood on both sides of the medical table, weapons poised, torture mechanisms ready to make Lazarus speak if he refused to tell.

The eyes of Lazarus fluttered open. Lazarus out of the tomb. Lazarus seeing his companions, iris widening upon itself, forcing shape out of mist. Seeing the curious blue skulls of anxious Martians collected in a watching crowd about him. Lazarus living, breathing, ready to speak.

Lazarus lifted his head, curiously, parted his lips, wetted them with his tongue, and then spoke. His first words were:

"What time is it?"

It was a simple sentence, and all of the Martians bent forward to catch its significance as one of the Martians replied:

"23:45."

Lazarus nodded and closed his eyes and lay back. "Good. He's safe then, by now. He's safe."

The Martians closed in, waiting for the next important words of the waking dead.

Lazarus kept his eyes closed, and he trembled a little, as if, in spite of himself, he couldn't help it.

He said:

"My name is Brandon."

Then, Lazarus laughed. . . .

SEVENTEEN

THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN

"No, there's no lief arguing. I got my mind fixed. You sashay off with your silly wicker basket. Land, Land, where you ever get notions like that? You just skit out of here and don't bother me, I got my tatting and knitting to do, and no never minds about tall dark gentlemen with fangled ideas."

The tall dark young man stood quietly, not moving. Aunt Tildy hurried on with her talk.

"You *heard* what I said, young man. If you got a mind to speechify me, well, you can talk, but meantime I hope you don't mind if I pour myself a bit of coffee. There. If you'd been a bit more polite, I mighta offered you some; but you stride in here high and mighty and you never rapped on the door no nothing. I don't like that kind of doing. You think you *own* the place."

Aunt Tildly fussed with her lap. "Land, now, where'd I lay the yarn. I'm making myself a comforter. These winters gets on mighty chill, I'll allow, and it ain't fittin' for a lady with bones like rice-paper to be settin' in a drafty old house like this without warming herself."

The tall dark man sat down.

"That's an antique chair, so be gentle with it," warned Aunt Tildy. "Now, if you want to start again, tell me what you got to tell, I'll listen respectful. But keep your voice down and stop staring at me with funny lights in your eyes. Land, it gives me shudders."

The grandfather clock in the hall had just finished striking three. There were four men out in the hall grouped around the wicker, strangely quiet and hardly moving, like they were frozen.

"Now, about that wicker basket," began Aunt. "It's over six feet long, and by the look of it, it ain't laundry. And those four men you got with you, you don't need them—why, it's light as thistles. Eh?"

The dark young man was leaning forward on the antique chair. He said, "The basket won't be light after awhile. There'll be something in it."

"Shaw, now." Aunt Tildy mused. "Now where have I seen a wicker like that before? Seems it was only a couple years ago. Seems to me—oh. Now I remembers. Certainly I do. It was when Mrs. Dwyer passed away next door."

Aunt Tildy put her coffee cup down, sternly. "So that's what you're up to? I thought you were trying to sell me something. Just wait until my little Emily comes home from college this afternoon. I wrote her a note the other day. Not admitting, of course, that I wasn't feeling quite ripe and pert, but sort of hinting that I'd like to see her again, it's been a bunch of weeks. She living in New York and all. Almost like my own daughter, Emily is.

"Now, she'll take care of you. She'll shoo you out'n this parlor so quick it'll—"

"Aren't you tired?" asked the dark young man.

"No, I'm not."

"It would be so nice for you to rest," said the dark young man.

"Great sons of Goshen on the Gilbery Dike! I got a hundred comforters, two hundreds of sweaters and six hundred pot-holders left in these skinny fingers fumbling with clicking needles and bright yarns. You go away and come back when I'm done, and maybe I'll talk to you." Aunt Tildy shifted subjects. "Let me tell you about Emily. She's such a sweet, fair child."

Aunt Tildy nodded thoughtfully. Emily. With hair like the tassels of light yellow corn, just as soft and sweet.

"I well remember the day her mother died, twenty years ago, leaving Emily to my house. That's why I'm mad at you and your wicker baskets an sech goings-on. Who ever heard of people dying for any good cause. Young man, I don't *like* it. Why, I remember—"

Aunt Tildy paused, a brief memory of pain touching her heart. She remembered 25 years ago, and her father's voice back in that old fragment of time:

"Tildy," he'd said, "what are you going to do in life? The way you act, men don't have much with you. Nothing permanent, I mean. You kiss and run. You don't settle down and raise children."

"Papa," Tildy snapped right back at him. "I likes laughing and playing and singing, but I'm not the marrying kind. You know why?"

"Why?" asked Papa.

"I can't find a man who has my philosophy, Papa."

"What philosophy is that?"

"That death is silly. And it is. It took away Mama when we needed her most of all. Now, do you call that intelligent?"

. . .

Papa looked at her and his eyes got wet and gray and bleak. He patted her shoulder. "You're always right, Tildy. But what can we do? Death comes to everybody?"

"Fight back," she cried. "Strike it below the belt. Fight it. Don't believe in it!"

"It can't be done," said Papa, sadly. "You're all alone in the world."

"There's got to be a beginning somewhere. I'm beginning my own philoso-

phy here and now," Tildy declared. "Why, it's just silly that people live a couple years and then are dropped like a wet seed in a hole and nothing sprouts but a smell. What good do they do that way? They lay there a million years, doing no good for nobody. Most of 'em fine, nice and neat people, or at least trying."

So, after a few years, Papa died. Aunt Tildy remembered how she had tried to talk him out of it, but he passed on anyway. Then she ran away. She couldn't stay with him after he was dead. He was a denial of her philosophy. She didn't attend his burial. She didn't do anything but set up this antique shop on the front of this old house and live alone for years, that is until Emily came.

Tildy didn't want to take the girl in. Why? Because Emily believed in dying. But her mother was an old friend, and Tildy had promised.

"Emily," continued Aunt Tildy, to the man in black, "was the first person to live in this house with me in years. I never got married. I didn't like the idea of living with a man for twenty-thirty year and then have him up and die on me. It would shake my philosophy down like a house of cards. I shied away from the world pretty much. I guess I got pretty persnickety at people if they ever so much as mentioned death to me."

The young man politely interrupted now, and took up Aunt Tildy's story for her in even, calm and quiet tones:

"All through the last World War, as I recall, you never read a newspaper. You beat a man over the head with your umbrella and drove him from your shop, when he insisted on telling you about the battle of the Argonne.

"When radio came in, you stuck by your old phonograph. You played the nice old records. Harry Lauder singing Roamin' in the Gloamin', and Madame Schumann-Heink with her lullabies. As the years passed, you tried to teach Emily, but her mind was made up about—certain things. She was nice enough to respect your way of thinking, and she never mentioned—morbid—things."

Aunt Tildy sniffed. "Think you're smart, huh? How you know all those things?" She shrugged her shoulders. "Well, now, if you think you can come and talk me into that silly wicker basket, you're way off the trestle. If you so much as lay a hand on me I'll spit *right in* your face!"

The young man smiled. Aunt Tildy sniffed again.

"Now, you don't have to simper at me like a sick dog. I'm too old to be made love at. That's all twisted dry, like an old tube of paint, and left behind in the years."

There was a noise. The clock in the hall struck three. Strange. It seemed to Aunt Tildy that it had just done that once before, a moment ago. She liked the old clock. Ivory and ebony with gold angels hanging naked around the face of it. Nice tone. Like cathedral chimes sounding softly.

"Are you just going to sit there, young man?"

"I am."

"Then you won't mind if I take a nap. Just a little cat nap. Now, don't you get up off that chair. You set right there. You set there and don't come creeping round me, toddying. Just gonna close my eyes for a wee bit. That's right. That's right . . . ."

Nice and cool and restful time of day. No noise. Silence. Just the clock a ticking away busy as termites in wood. Just the old room smelling of polished mahogany and leather in the morris chair, and books sitting stiff on the shelves. So nice.

You aren't getting up from the chair, are you, Mister? Better not. I got one eye open for you. Yes, indeed I have. Yes, I have. Oh. Ah. Hmm.

So nice. So drowsy. So quiet. Oh, so nice.

Who's that moving around in the dark with my eyes closed?

Who's that kissing my cheek? That you, Emily? No. No. Guess it was my imagination. Only—dreaming. Land, yes, that's what it is. Drifting off, off, off. . . .

. . .

Ah? What say? Oh!

"Just a moment while I put on my glasses. There."

The clock, unpredictably, still said only a few minutes after three. Shame, old clock. Have to have it fixed.

The young man in dark clothing stood near the door. Aunt Tildy nodded her head.

"You leaving so soon, young man? Good thing. Emily's coming home and she'd fix you. Had to give up, didn't you? Couldn't convince me, could you? I'm mule-stubborn. You couldn't get me out of this house, nosirree. Well, young man, you needn't bother coming back to try again."

The young man bowed with slow dignity.

"I have no intention of coming again. Never."

"Fine," declared Aunt Tildy. "I always told Papa I'd win out. Why, I'm gonna sit here by this window and knit for the next thousand years. They'll have to rip its boards down around me to get me out."

The dark young man was smiling funny.

"Why you smirking?" demanded Aunt Tildy. "You just get out, and quit looking like the cat that ate the canary. And you tote that old fool wicker basket with you."

The four men were already treading heavily out the front door. Aunt Tildy studied the way they handled the basket. It wasn't heavy, and yet they were staggering under its weight.

"Here, now!" Aunt Tildy arose in tremulous indignation. "Did you steal something from my antique shop? My books." She glanced about concernedly. "No, the clocks? No. What you got in that wicker?"

"Curious?" asked the young man, softly.

"Curious? Me? Shaw, no. Get out. Get it outa here!"

"Good-by."

"Good-by to you, too. Go away!"

. . .

The door closed. That was better. Gone. Darned fool men with their funny ideas. No never minds about the wicker. If they stole something, she didn't care, as long as they let her be.

"Here now," said Aunt Tildy, pleased. "Here comes Emily home from college. About time. Lovely girl, walking along. But, Lord, the girl looks pale and funny today. Walking so slow. I wonder why. Looks worried, she does. Poor girl. Tired, maybe. I'll just hustle her up a pot of coffee and a tray of cakes."

Emily came up the front steps. While Aunt Tildy was bustling around, she could hear the slow, deliberative steps. What ails the girl, thought Tildy. Didn't sound like she had no more spunk than a dead lizard. The door opened in front. Emily stood out in the hall. Why didn't she come in? Funny girl.

"Oh, Emily?" called Aunt Tildy.

Emily came walking in.

"Oh, there you are, Emily. I been waiting for you to come. There was the darndest fool men roaming about in here with a wicker basket, and a young man who tried talking me into something I didn't want. You just missed them. Glad you're home. Makes it right cozy—"

Aunt Tildy stopped talking. She realized that for a full minute Emily had been staring at her. Staring hard.

"Emily. What's wrong? Why you looking at me like that, Emily? Stop your staring? Here, now, I'll bring you a cup of coffee. There.

"Emily, why you backing away from me?

"Emily, stop screaming, child. Stop screaming, Emily! Stop screaming! You keep screaming, like that, you go crazy. Emily, get up off the floor, get away from that wall, cringing, Emily! Emily, stop screaming, screaming, child! I won't hurt you.

"Land, if it ain't one thing it's another.

"Emily, what's *WRONG,* child . . . ?"

. . .

Emily groaned and put her hands up to her face.

"Emily, child, here now. Sip this water. Here now, child. That's it."

Emily opened her eyes, stared, and then shut them, quivering, and pulled back. "Oh, Aunt Tildy. Oh."

"Stop that!" Aunt Tildy slapped her. "What ails you?"

Emily forced herself to look upon Tildy again.

She thrust out her young fingers and they vanished inside of Aunt Tildy.

"What fool notion thing are you messing with!" cried Tildy, surprised. "Take your hand away! Take it away, I say!"

Emily trembled again and turned away her head, shaking her golden hair into shining temblors. "You're not here, you're gone. Oh, you're gone. Oh, you're gone. I'm just dreaming."

"You're not dreaming. Hush, baby. Lands of Goshen!"

"You're dead. Oh, it's awful. You're dead. You CAN'T be here."

This sort of talk upset Tildy a great deal. She took Emily's hand and it passed clean through her lacy bosom. Instantly, Aunt Tildy raged to her feet, stomping them.

"Why—why—" she muttered angrily, "that—that fibber, that liar—that sneak-thief!" Her thin hands knotted into wiry hard pale fists. "That dark, dark fiend! He stole it, he stole it! He took it away, he did, oh, he did, he did! Why, I—" She could find no words to symbolize the steaming wrath within her. Her pale blue eyes were fire. She spluttered off into an indignant silence. Then she turned to Emily. "Child, get up off that floor. I need your help. Get up, now!"

Emily lay there, shivering.

"All right," declared Aunt Tildy. "PART of me is here. By the Lord Harry, what's left of me will have to do, momentarily. Now stop gawking and fetch my cloak and bonnet!"

Emily confessed. "I'm—scared. I'm—so scared."

Aunt Tildy planted fists on bustled hips. "Is you scared of me?"

"Yes."

"Why? I'm no booger. I'm just me. You known me most of your life. Now's no time to snivel and sopp. You fetch up on your feet or I'll slap you straight across the bridge of your nose!"

Emily rose in sobbing haste. She stood like a cornered animal, trying to decide which direction to bolt in.

"Where's your car, Emily?"

"Out—in—front, Ma'am."

"Good." Aunt Tildy hustled her out the front door. "Now—" Her sharp stare poked both directions of the street. "Which way is it to the mortuary?"

Emily had to hold onto the rail of the steps fumbling down. "What are you going to do, Aunt Tildy?"

"Do?" cried Tildy, tottering after her, jowls shaking in a thin, pale fury. "Why, get my body back, of course! *Get my body back! Go on!*"

. . .

The car roared, Emily clenched to the steering-wheel, staring straight ahead at the curving rain-wetted streets. Aunt Tildy shook her parasol.

"Hurry, child, hurry. Hurry before they squirt juices into my body and dices and cubes in the way them persnickety morticians have a habit of doing. They cuts and sews it so it ain't no good to no one!"

"Oh, Auntie, Auntie, leave me go, don't make me drive. It won't do no good, no good at all," sighed the girl.

"Humph!" was all the old woman would say. "Humph!"

Emily pulled into the curb and cut the motor.

"Here," she said, wearily. "Here we are, Auntie." She collapsed over the wheel, but Aunt Tildy was already skedaddled from the open door and trotting with mincing skirt up the concrete drive and around in back to where the shining black hearse was unloading a wicker basket.

Aunt Tildy thrust to the attack, immediately.

"Young man," she directed her shout at one of the four men unloading the basket, "young man, put down that basket. Put it right down!"

The four men carrying the basket paid little attention.

One of them said, "Step aside, lady. We're doing our job. Let us do it, please."

"But that's my body you got tucked in there!" declared Auntie, brandishing her parasol.

"That I wouldn't know anything about," said a third man. "Please don't block traffic, Madame. This thing is heavy."

That probed a painful wound in Aunt Tildy's pride.

"Sir," she cried. "I'll have you know I only weigh one hundred and ten pounds!"

He looked at her with funny eyes. "I'm not interested in your hip measurements, lady. I just wanna go home and eat dinner. My wife'll kill me if I'm late."

The four of them forged ahead, Aunt Tildy in hot pursuit through a large door into a hall, down the hall and into a preparations room.

A man in a clean white smock stood awaiting its arrival with a rather pleased smile on his long, eager-looking face. Aunt Tildy didn't care for the avidity of that face, or the personality of the entire man himself. The basket was deposited and the four men retreated.

The man in the white smock, evidently a mortician, glanced at Auntie and said:

"Madame, this is no fit place for a gentle-woman."

"Well," said Auntie, gratified, "I'm glad you feel that way. Them is my sentiments, but I can't seem to convince those other men. That's exactly what I tried to tell that dark-clothed young man."

The mortician puzzled. "What dark-clothed young man is that?"

"The one who came puddling around my house, that's who."

"We have no one of that description working for us—"

"Well," Auntie continued, "as you just so intelligently said, this is no place for a gentle lady like me. And I don't want me here. I want me home, I want

me cooking turkey for Sunday visitors, it's almost Easter time. I got people to worry about. Emily to feed, all them sweaters to finish knitting—"

The mortician was patient but beginning to get perturbed. "I'm sure you're quite philosophical and philanthropical, Madame, but I have no time. A body has just arrived." This last, he said with evident relish, and a glance at his assorted scalpels and instruments.

Aunt Tildy bristled. "If you lays so much as a cuticle on that body, I'll beat you," she assured him. Again, the parasol.

He brushed her aside like a little old moth.

"Oh, Heimings," he called gently to one of the men. "Escort this little lady outside, please."

Aunt Tildy glared at the fellow.

"Show me your backside, going the other way!"

The assistant came and held onto Aunt Tildy's wrists. "This way, please."

• • •

Tildy extricated herself easily. It wasn't hard with the way her flesh sort of—slipped. It even amazed Tildy. Such an unexpected talent to develop at this late stage. "There," said Auntie, much pleased at her ability. "See? You can't budge me. I want my body back!"

The mortician opened the wicker basket casually, then in a recurrent series of double-takes realized that the body was—it seemed—maybe—yes—no—well, uh—it couldn't be but—"Ah," he exhaled suddenly. He turned. His eyes were wide.

"Madame," he said, cautiously. "Eh—this lady in here. Eh—is she—a—relative of yours?"

"A very dear relative. Be careful of her."

"A twin sister, perhaps." He grasped at a straw of dwindling logic, hopefully.

"No, you fool. Me, do you hear? Me!"

The mortician considered the proposition. He shook his head to clear the fog. "No," he decided. "Things like this don't happen." He busied himself about the room, made preparations. "Take her away, William. Get the other men and take her away. I can't work with a crank around."

When the four men assembled and converged upon her, Aunt Tildy was a fortress in lavendered lace. Arms crossed in muscular defiance she said, "I won't budge." She continued to repeat that phrase as she was evicted in consecutive moves, like a pawn on a chessboard, from preparation room to resting room to hall, to waiting chamber, to funeral parlor, where she made her last stand by sitting herself down on a chair in the very center of the funeral vestibule. There were pews going back into gray silence, and a smell of flowers.

"You can't sit there, lady," said one of the men. "That's where the body rests for the service tomorrow."

"I'm sitting right plumb here until I get what I want. Sit right here on this spot," was Auntie's instant retort.

. . .

They tried to move her. She just sat there, pale fingers fussing with her fussy lace at her throat, jaw set, one high shining shoe tapping impatiently. If they got near enough she quickly whopped them a whop with her parasol. And when they touched her she sort of—slipped—away.

Mr. Carrington, the Mortuary President, heard the disturbance from his office in back and came toddling in to see what the commotion was about. He scurried down the aisle. "Here, here," he whispered, finger to mouth, "Show more respect. What is this? Oh. Madame, may I help you?"

She looked him up and down. "You may."

"And how may I be of service, please?"

"Go in that room over there," directed Aunt Tildy.

"Yes?"

"And tell that eager young investigator to quit fiddling with my body. I'm a maiden lady, and my moles, birthmarks, scars and other bric-a-brac, including the turn of my ankle, are my own secrets. I don't want him prying around, cutting it or hurting it in any way."

This was a trifle vague to Mr. Carrington, who had not as yet had an opportunity to correlate bodies. "I don't—see," he said, in vague helplessness.

"He's got me in there on his table like a turkey ready to be drawn and stuffed—"

Mr. Carrington hustled off to verify this claim. After fifteen minutes of waiting silence and horrified arguing, comparing of notes with the mortician behind the closed door, Mr. Carrington returned, pale and shaking, to confront Auntie.

"Well?" said Auntie.

"Uh—that is. Most irregular. You can't—sit—there."

"Can't I?"

Carrington dropped his glasses, picked them up, fumbled them on his nose and said, "You are making it difficult for us."

"I? I!" raged Auntie. "Saint Vitus in the morning! Now, looky here, Mister Blood and Bones or whatever, you tell that—"

"But he's already extracting the blood from the body."

"What!" Auntie swayed and coughed. It was like a kick in the face with an iron boot.

"What'd you say?"

"Yes, yes, oh, I assure you, yes. So you just go away, there's nothing to be done. The blood is running from the body and it'll soon be all filled with nice fresh A-1 formaldehyde." He laughed nervously. "Our mortician is also performing a brief autopsy to determine the cause of death."

Auntie was on her feet, burning. "Cutting me, is he?"

"Y-yes."

"He can't do that. Only coroners are allowed to do that."

"Well, we sometimes allow a little—"

"Young man!"

"Yes'm?"

"You are going to march plumb straight into that room now and you are going to tell that Cutemup to pump all that nice New England blue blood right back into that fine-skinned old body, and if he's taken anything out of that body, for him to attach it back in so it'll function proper, and then you'll turn that body, fresh as paint back into my keeping. You hear, you HEAR!"

"There's nothing I can do. Nothing."

"Awright then, snigger-britches. Tell you WHAT. I'm setting here on this spot for the next two hundred years. You hear? And every time anyone comes in I'll spit ectoplasm right square in their left nostril!"

Carrington fumbled that thought around in the weakening interior of his mind and emitted a squeak. "Oh, no. No. You'll dislocate our business. Heavens. Millions of dollars will be lost. You wouldn't do that?"

Auntie smiled pleasantly. "*Wouldn't* I?"

Carrington ran up the dark aisle and in the distance one could hear him frantically fingering a dial-phone and then talking to a series of important people. It took him half an hour and then huge cars began roaring up in front of the mortuary and the brothers Harrington arrived to bolster their hysterical president.

All six of them came down the aisle like a delegation of diplomats. "What seems to be the trouble?"

Auntie told them with a few well-chosen cuss words.

They held a conference, meanwhile notifying the mortician to discontinue his home-work until such time as an amenable agreement had been reached. The mortician came out of his chamber and stood smiling quietly and smoking a cigar.

Auntie looked at the cigar.

"Where did you put the ashes?" she cried, horrified.

The mortician only smiled imperturbably and puffed.

The committee finally decided. Harrington Number One represented the others.

"Madame, we need this vestibule to carry on our business. We need it badly. Now, in all fairness, you wouldn't throw us out on the street to continue our services, would you?"

. . .

Auntie looked the vultures over. "Oh, I wouldn't mind. No, I wouldn't mind at all."

Harrington wiped sweat from his cheeks. "Our proposition is this. You can have your body back."

"Ha!" shouted Auntie. Then, with caution: "Intact?"

"Intact."

"Without formaldehyde?"

"Without formaldehyde!"

"With blood in it?"

"Blood. Yes, yes, oh, my God, yes, if only you'll take it and go."

Auntie nodded a prim head. "Fair enough. Fix it up, and it's a deal!"

Harrington glared at the mortician. "Well, don't stand there! Fix it up!"

"And be careful with that cigar butt," added Auntie.

. . .

"Easy, easy," said Aunt Tildy. "Put the wicker basket down on the floor where I can step in it easy."

They placed the wicker on the floor. She didn't look at the body much. Her only comment was, "Natural looking." Then she let herself fall backward into the wicker.

There was a sudden biting sensation of arctic coldness, a great twisting nausea and a spinning. It was like two drops of matter coalescing. Water trying to seep into concrete. So slow to do. So hard. Like a butterfly trying to fight back into its discarded husk of chrysalis.

All the faces watched Aunt Tildy in her struggles. Mr. Harrington was evidently concerned. He kept wringing his fingers apprehensively and trying to help with gestures. The mortician was frankly skeptical and in grim humor. The others just stared.

Seeping into cold granite stone. Seeping into a frozen and ancient statue. Fighting all the way.

"Come alive, damn ye!" shouted Aunt Tildy to herself. "Raise up a bit."

The body half rose, fumbling inside the dry wicker.

"Get to your legs, woman!"

The body rose further, blindly groping.

"See!" shouted Aunt Tildy.

Light entered the webbed blind eyes.

"Feel!" urged Aunt Tildy.

The body felt the warmth of the room, the sudden presence of the preparations table against which to lean, panting.

"Move!"

The body took a creakingly unsteady step.

"Hear!" she shouted.

All the noises of the place came into the dulled ears. Opening up to let them in. The harsh, expectant breathing of the mortician and the whimpering Mr. Harrington.

"Walk!" she cried.

The body walked.

"Think!" Auntie said.

The old brain thought.

"Now—speak!" she ordered.

The body spoke, bowing to the mortician's crew.

"Much obliged. Thank you."

"Now," said Aunt Tildy, finally. "Cry!"

And she began to cry tears of utter happiness.

. . .

And now, any afternoon, about four, if you want to visit Aunt Tildy, you just walk around to her antique shop and rap on the door. There's a big black funeral wreath on the door. But don't mind that. Aunt Tildy left it there. She has *some* sense of humor.

You rap on the door. It's double-barred and triple-locked, and when you rap her voice shrills out at you:

"Is that the man in black?"

And you laugh and say no, no, it's only me, Aunt Tildy.

And she laughs and says, "Come in quick!" and she whips the door open and slams it shut back of you so no man in black can ever slip in behind you. Then she escorts you in and pours you your cup of coffee and shows you her latest knitted sweater for the boys overseas. She's not as fast as she used to be, and can't see as good, but she gets along.

"And, if you're especially good," Aunt Tildy declares, setting her coffee-cup to one side, "I'll give you a little treat."

"What's that?" visitors will ask.

"This," says Auntie, pleased with her little uniqueness, her little joke.

Then with modest moves of her fingers she will unfasten the white lace at her neck and chest and for a brief moment show what lies beneath.

The long blue scar where the autopsy was neatly sewn together.

"Not bad sewing for a *man*," she allows.

"Oh, some more coffee? *There.*"

EIGHTEEN

THE TRUNK LADY

CHAPTER ONE

The Lady of Death!

Johnny Menlo kicked his shoes and sat down hard on the bottom of the attic stairs. His teacher, his special private tutor, was *not* coming, after all. So he *wouldn't* have someone in the house all to himself.

Downstairs, the party was running full blast. The sounds of it came up, mockingly—the laughter, the cocktail shakers clinking, the music. Johnny thought he had gotten away from its sounds, sitting way up here, so lonely. His teacher was supposed to have come today. She hadn't.

Mom and Dad, so busy drinking with people, gave Johnny the kind of look you give your shadow.

Johnny retreated further up the stairs into the complete musty asylum of the abandoned attic. Even up here the dust and warm afternoon quiet was rustled by the party noises from below.

Johnny glanced around. There were four trunks sitting under veils of webs in the dim corners. A sunbeam fell through a small dirty window, lighted things for Johnny's curious blue eyes.

The trunk in the north corner, for instance. It was always locked, the key hidden somewhere. The hasps were down now, but the brass tongue in the middle was flipped up, unlocked.

Johnny walked to the trunk and pried the hasps open. He pulled the lid up. Suddenly, the attic was very cold.

She was inside.

Curled-up, her body was, young, pretty. Her slender face was like chalk etched against the blackboard of her hair. Johnny gasped, but not too loudly. He held onto the trunk rim. Only her perfume was still alive. She looked as lonely and abandoned as he felt. He sympathized. Attics are places for things neglected and forgotten.

Death had apparently come through suffocation. Someone had slammed the heavy air-tight lid down upon her curved loveliness. Her hand was like a white fragment of it against her filmy pink cocktail dress.

A moment later he found the balled wad of paper on the floor. It was only part of a note, with *her* writing on it.

> "—you've got to make it up to me, the way I've been treated. It shouldn't be difficult. I could be Johnny's teacher. That would explain my presence in the house to everyone.
> ELLIE."

He looked at her quiet beauty. It seemed as if she might have fallen asleep during the cocktail party and had been carried here and the lid slammed down upon her while in slumber!

The attic dimness moved in about Johnny, shaking him, then drawing out, leaving him numbed and saying:

"Are you my teacher? Are you the one I was going to have for myself alone? But they—they killed you? Why should anyone kill my teacher?"

Another thought rushed the first away. He, Johnny Menlo, of the society Menlos, had found a body, hadn't he? *Sure.* His eyes widened. Mom and Dad'd *have* to notice him now, more often.

Why, even Grandma would quit playing chess all day with Uncle Flinny, choke on her brandy, stare at him through thick glasses and cry, "My God, child, your snooping finally came to a profit, did it?"

Sure! Sure! Johnny blinked rapidly, his heart pounding.

Cousin William might even *faint* at the news!

He, Johnny Menlo, had found the body. Pictures in the papers of *himself* instead of Mother beaming out of the society columns.

Hiding the note in his pocket, Johnny took one last long look at the pretty lashes and the pink lips and the dark black hair of the Trunk Lady. He closed the lid on her sleeping.

He'd scream. Yes, at the top of the grand stairs. Scream till the sky fell down, and the party with it! Scream!

His screaming wasn't bad at all.

Down the stairs, across the hall, making a path with his screaming through the startled ranks of people, Johnny reached Mother's glittering cocktail gown, and held onto it, very tightly.

"Johnny, Johnny, why are you downstairs? What's the matter? I told you—"

Mother's girl-face looked down over the glitter. He grabbed another fistful of spangles. He yelled it:

"Mom, there's a body in the attic!"

Like faces in a football stadium, the faces watching them. Mother stiffened, then relaxed. "Let go my dress, darling, you'll get it dirty. Look at your hands, cobwebs and all. Now run up to your room like a good boy." She patted his head.

"But Mom!" he wailed. "There's a body—"

"Good Lord," someone murmured. "Just like his father."

Johnny spun angrily. "You shut up! There is *so* a body!"

. . .

Mother didn't see him. She looked at her guests, and all Johnny could see was her lovely swan-like throat, the firm chin with the pulse beating under it, her fingers fixing the chestnut shine of hair swept up from her ears.

"Please forgive Johnny," she was saying. "Children are so imaginative, aren't they?"

Her chin came down. There was no light in her blue eyes. "You'd better go upstairs, Johnny."

"Oh, but Mom—"

His world was crashing. The spangles slipped from between his fingers. He suddenly hated everyone at the party, looking at him.

"You heard what your mother said, General."

That was Dad's resonant voice and it meant the fight was lost. Johnny jerked around, shot one last glare at the people, and ran upstairs, tears coming into his eyes.

He twisted the brass knob of Grandma's door. She sat playing chess with Uncle Flinny, before the great glaring window. Sunlight glinted off her glasses. She hardly looked up.

"Pardon me, Granny, but—"

She shifted her cane against her thin knee. "Well?"

"There's a body in the attic and nobody'll believe me—"

"Go away, Johnny!"

"But," he cried. "There's a body!"

"We know it, we know it! Now run get Cousin William a bottle of cognac! Scat! Go!"

Johnny went and got the cognac from the wine pantry, rapped on Cousin William's door and thought he heard indrawn breath behind the paneling. Then Cousin William whispered quickly:

"Who's there?"

"Cognac."

"Oh, fine, fine!" Cousin William's weak-chinned, rabbity face poked out, his soft hands darting after the offered liquor. "Thank God. Now get away and let me get drunk!"

The door slammed, but before it did Johnny got a brief glimpse of the cluttered, disorderly interior of Cousin William's Designing Room—the mannikins standing stiff around with brilliant silks draped, cut, fixed to them, water color sketches of capes, hats, suits thumbtacked to the plaster walls. Bright heaps of woolens, threaded spools, and all. The door cut it off, locked it in, and Cousin William was nervously attending his cognac behind the shining knob.

Johnny eyed the hall phone, his anger simmering. He thought of Mom and Dad dancing, Uncle Flinny and Grandma playing their eternal chess, Cousin William drinking—and himself a stranger in this great old echoing house. He snatched up the phone.

"Uh—I want—that is—give me the police station."

Another deep voice cut in on the operator's:

"Hang up the phone, Johnny. Hang up and go to bed." Dad's very resonant and cultured voice.

Johnny hung up, slowly. So this was his reward for finding a body? He sat and cried with frustration. He felt like the lady in the trunk, the lid slammed in his face by five people! *Slammed!*

He was twisting in bed when Uncle Flinny softly opened the door and poked his curly, soft-haired, big head into the room. His eyes were round, black, gentle, peaceful looking. He came in with slow, soft movements, sat on the edge of the chair beside the bed like a very quiet little bird. He folded his bird-like fingers.

"Since you're retiring early," he said, "I thought I'd better come tell your bedtime story early, too. Yes?"

Johnny felt himself too old for stories. Being raised in such an adult house, with few contacts with children, and having an advanced education, with such mature talk and mature people around, he felt himself far above bedtime stories. But he resigned himself, sighed, and said, "Okay, Uncle Flinny. Go ahead. Shoot."

Uncle Flinny held onto his neatly pressed black trousers at the knees, as if they'd explode, and slowly pieced out his tale.

"Well, once there was a young woman who was very beautiful—"

Oh! oh! Johnny'd heard this story a thousand times before. He fidgeted. *A body in the attic and he had to listen to this.*

"And," continued Uncle Flinny, "this beautiful young girl fell in love with and married a young knight. They lived happily for years. Until one day a Dark One kidnapped the beautiful woman and ran away with her." Uncle Flinny looked sad and old.

"And then the husband came home," prompted Johnny.

Uncle Flinny didn't hear him at all. He just kept talking in a funny, soft monotone. "The husband chased the Dark One into a Dark Land. But no matter how hard he pleaded, or tried to catch up with the Dark One, he never could. His wife was gone forever. Forever."

. . .

Uncle Flinny's breathing was uneven, harsh. His eyes glowed dark, round. His lips trembled. He wasn't himself. He was someone else off a million miles in that Dark Land. He seized his knees tighter and bent over them.

"But the husband searched and searched, vowing that someday he would find and kill the Dark One, and, wonder of wonders, he did! He struck the Dark One down, but oh God above, after striking the Dark One he found that somehow the Dark One looked like his beautiful wife! And he found to his horror that he himself was growing—darker and darker. . . ."

The end. Johnny hoped there'd be no more.

Uncle Flinny sat sighing, in the atmosphere he'd built from the story. He'd forgotten Johnny was a part of the room. His hands were shaking and he was out of breath. He just sat there.

Johnny shivered for no reason he knew. "Thanks. Thanks very much, Uncle Flinny," he said. "Thanks for the swell story."

Uncle Flinny turned blind eyes. "Unh?" He relaxed, recognizing Johnny. "Oh, yes. Anytime. Anytime at all."

"You sure get steamed up, Uncle Flinny."

Uncle Flinny quietly opened the door. "Goodnight, Johnny."

"Oh, Uncle!"

"Yes?"

Johnny stopped himself. "Never mind."

Uncle Flinny shuffled out. The door closed gently.

Johnny bounced furiously on the springs. "The things I've had to do the last few days, to keep this family happy! Listen to Uncle Flinny—wait on Grandma—get out of the way of Mother— Obey Father. And keep Cousin William drunk. Guh!"

He was tired of them all. For a change, why not some attention for *himself?* He could hear the party continuing downstairs. Slipping from bed, he listened against the door.

In the next hour he heard all varieties of feet upon the stairs, like heartbeats in the house. The crisp, snapping moves of Grandma and her pert cane feeling the layers of altitude. The shuffle of Uncle Flinny. The even, long and easy stride of Dad. The glide of Mother. The nervous, uneasy tripping of Cousin William.

And there were voices talking, some arguing, some urging, others hysterical, mixed—Dad calm, Mother criticizing, Grandma stern, Cousin William whimpering, Uncle Flinny quiet. Once or twice the attic door creaked.

No one even came near Johnny's room. The party still existed downstairs, unaware of all this badinage. Night was coming swiftly on with an autumn chill.

Finally, it was quiet again. Johnny hurried up the dark, dusty stairs into the attic, heart beating quickly. He'd show *them!*

The trunk was not heavy, strangely enough. One could easily tip it toward the stairs, and the stairs led down to the landing. One more push from the landing and down, down, down into the living room. Yes. They'd have to believe him now!

Johnny tipped the trunk.

CHAPTER TWO

The Plastic Corpse

People were talking. Music was playing on the radio-phonograph. Mom and Dad mingled with the bright swarm, flames about which social moths beat their sophisticated wings.

It was in the very midst of these things that Johnny's small voice made some sort of declaration from atop the hall staircase. He yelled loudly:

"Mom! Dad!"

Everybody turned and looked, like at a reception.

The woman came down the stairs.

Somebody had to scream. It sounded almost like Cousin William. But everybody watched, falling back, as the woman came down the stairs in her filmy cocktail dress. Well, she didn't exactly *come* down. She *rolled.*

Over and over, arm limp, legs limp, head bobbing, hair flailing in a dark whip, around and down, softly nudging the steps, jointless, boneless and lifeless. When she reached the bottom, Johnny was right after her.

"I told you, Mother! Dad, I found her again! I found her!"

He'd always and forever remember Mother's face in that moment and the way she said his name. "Johnny . . . !" And the way she struck him across the face.

Someone said, "Call the police!"

Someone else had the phone, ticking it. Dad's face was like a wet, gray clam, suddenly old and tired. Johnny fell back from Mother's blow, holding to the bannister. He thought: She's never hit me before. Never before. Always kind and good, thoughtless at times, maybe, but she never went and hit me before today.

Then it happened. Everybody began laughing. Somebody pointed at the body, their faces got red and they laughed. Dad laughed, too, with everything but his eyes.

"I'll be damned," someone said. "So that's the body the child found upstairs?"

"A mannikin!" someone declared.

"Of course. A store window dummy. Easy to see how a child might think it a body." Again, laughter. Lots of it.

"A mannikin." The laughter grew and grew upon itself.

Johnny, trembling, crept and bent and touched the outflung hand, pulled away, touched it again, felt tremblingly the hard cold plastic.

"That's not the body," he said, looking up, bewildered. He shook his head, moving back. "That's not the body at all," he said. "The other body was different. Warmish and soft. It was a real woman!"

"Johnny!"

Dad had stopped smiling. Mother clenched a fist with white knuckles.

Johnny said, "Just the same, it's not the one!" He began to cry. Tears came as on the wind-shield of a car in a storm, erasing the world in wet portions. "Just the same, she was dead and she wasn't made of plaster!"

. . .

The house was full of sounds late that night. People talking in locked rooms. Arguments. Once, he thought he heard Cousin William sobbing. Feet climbed stairs, lights clicked on and off. Finally everyone was in bed, and Johnny sat up, throwing back the covers. That clicking was Cousin William double-locking his door. Why? . . . Because someone or something was walking around in the house?

Johnny started. His doorknob was turning. The door pushed open a few inches. Someone was standing there in the darkness, looking in. A heart is an erratic thing. Like mercury. It scurries all over a person's insides. Johnny's heart was like mercury.

The door remained open. The shadow remained standing in the doorway, staring, looking in. Johnny said nothing. Then, very matter-of-factly, the shadow withdrew, and the door closed.

Rapping the lock home hard, Johnny threw his breath out and lay trembling on the door. Pressure from outside a moment later, from that withdrawn shadow, could not force the bolt. Johnny listened. The shadow went away.

Very weakly, Johnny returned to bed, trembling. "Mom! Mom," he said to himself, "are you mad at me for making a scene before all of society? Would *you* kill me, Mom? Was there something about the Trunk Lady and Dad, something you didn't like, and did *you* kill her because of it? Now, when I come around, in the way, what will you do to me? Oh, Mom, it *can't* be you!"

"Dad," he said, the same way, "*you* made me hang up the phone. Are *you* afraid it will get out, too? Afraid for your business, your money, your reputation at the club, huh, Dad? Was that you standing in the door, silent and dark and thinking? You've been my favorite in the family. But now, today, you're so quiet and *you* don't even look at me."

Cousin William. He could have changed the bodies, tried to fool Johnny. He could have put one of the mannikins in the trunk, instead. Was she Cousin William's girlfriend? Was she causing trouble, somehow? Or was Cousin William just afraid for his reputation. Him and his mannikins and his famous, expensive dresses for expensive women. Was it him, twisting the doorknob a moment ago?

Maybe it was Uncle Flinny, with his bedtime stories and his quiet ways. He loved Mother so much—his sister. He'd do anything for her or Dad or Grandma

or Cousin William. Would he kill for her or Dad or the others to keep this house whole, intact and untouched?

Grandma. Played her cold game of chess day by day and drank her brandy neat. Her whole life was keeping the house moving, together. Her whole life was society and position and taste. What if someone came into the house and tried to do all the ordering instead of her? What would she do to her?

All of them! All of them!

Johnny sank shivering back on the springs. A woman walked into a big moth-balled old mansion like this and suddenly everyone was afraid. Just *one* woman.

On the table beside his bed Johnny groped and found the note he'd discovered in the attic dust. He felt of it, and read it again in his mind:

> "—you've got to make it up to me, the way I've been treated. It shouldn't be difficult. I could be Johnny's teacher. That would explain everything.
> ELLIE."

Johnny turned over.

"Ellie, my teacher, where are you now?" he asked the darkness. "Lonely and resting in Cousin William's studio with all the other stiffened mannikins? Playing chess with Grandma, only not moving? In the cold, dark basement like the wine casks put away for all the years? Somewhere in this big house tonight. But maybe not tomorrow. Unless I find you before then. . . ."

. . .

There was a huge back yard, with many acres to it, fruit trees, a flower garden, the swimming pool, the bath-house, servants quarters immediately behind the big house. Sunlight caught between a row of sycamore trees and a high green fence that shielded all this from the street. There was an oak tree to dangle from in the afternoon, and a policeman who walked his beat just under that tree on the sidewalk beyond the fence. Johnny climbed up and waited.

The policeman walked below. Johnny rattled leaves.

"Hi, son," the policeman looked up. "Better watch out. You'll fall."

"I don't care," said Johnny. "We got a dead lady in our house and everybody keeps it secret."

The policeman made a smile. "You have, have you?"

Johnny shifted himself. "I found her in a trunk. Somebody killed her. I tried to call the police last night, but Dad wouldn't let me. I tipped the trunk over, and she fell downstairs but she turned out to be a wax doll. It wasn't the lady, after all."

"So," the policeman chuckled, enjoying it.

"But the other lady was real," insisted Johnny.

"What other lady?"

"The first one I found. Cousin William's a dress designer. He changed bodies. You should have seen everyone at breakfast this morning. Trying to be happy. Like in the movies. But they can't fool me. They're not happy. Mother looks tired, and she's real touchy. I wonder how long they can go around like this without yelling?"

The policeman scowled. "Honest to God, you sound just like my kid. Him and his Buck Rogers disintegrators and his comic books. Honest to God, it's a crime what they give the younger generation to read. Ruin their minds with it. Killing. Corpses. Ah!"

"But it's true!"

"See you later," said the policeman, and walked on.

Johnny clung there, and the tree trembled in the wind. Then he dropped down across the fence and gave chase. "You got to come look. They'll take her away if you don't—then nobody'll ever find her."

The policeman was patient. "Look, little boy, I can't go nowhere without no warrant. How do I know you're not lying?" He was joking, now.

"You've just *got* to believe me—that's all."

The policeman stuck out his hand.

"Here."

Johnny took it. The policeman walked.

"Where are we going?" asked Johnny.

"To see your mother."

"No!" Johnny squirmed frantically. "That won't help! She'll hate me for it! She'll lie about it!"

The policeman firmly escorted him around front and thumbed the bell. First a maid, and then Mother was at the door, her face pale as milk, her lips a red smear against the white. Her pompadour was a little toppled over. There were blue pouches under her suddenly dull eyes.

"Johnny!"

"Better keep him inside, ma'am." The policeman touched his cap. "He'll get hurt running in the street."

"Thank you, officer."

The officer looked at her, then at Johnny. Johnny started to speak, but he could only sob. Two tears ran down his cheeks as the door closed, shutting the officer outside.

Mother didn't say anything to Johnny. Not a word. She just stood there, lost and white, twisting her fingers. That was all.

CHAPTER THREE

"Let's Play Murder!"

Hours later in the day, Johnny wrote it all down upon a nickel tablet of paper. Everything he knew about the Trunk Lady, everything he knew about Cousin William, Mom, Dad, Uncle Flinny, Grandma.

Wetting his pencil, Johnny put it out in lines like this:

"The Lady in the Trunk loved Dad. Dad killed her when she came to the house." Johnny pouted over that one. "Either that or Mom killed her." Long years of viewing motion picture murders went through Johnny's mind. "Then, of course, Grandma or Uncle Flinny could have killed her because their authority and security was threatened." Yeah. Johnny scribbled quick. Let's see, now. "And Cousin William? Maybe it was his woman friend, after all." Johnny sort of hoped it was. He wasn't very partial to Cousin W. "Maybe, maybe there was something in Grandma's past? Or Uncle Flinny's?" Now, how about—

"Johnny!"

Grandma's voice. Johnny put away the pad.

Grandma came in the door and guided Johnny out through the hall and into her room, using her cane as a nervous prod. She seated him before the chess-board and nodded at the pale pieces. "Those are yours. Mine are black." She thought it over, eyes closed.

"Mine are always black."

"We can't play," Johnny announced. "Two of your black pieces are missing." He pointed.

She looked. "Uncle Flinny again. He's always taking some of my players. Always and forever. We'll play anyway. I'll use what I have. Move." She jabbed a skinny finger.

"Where's Uncle Flinny?"

"Watering the garden. Move," she ordered.

Her eyes watched his fingers in their path. She leaned forward slowly over the shining pieces. "We're all good people, Johnny. We led a good life these twenty years in this house. You've been in it only part of that twenty. We never asked for trouble. Don't make us any, Johnny."

He sat there. A fly buzzed against the large window. Far away, below, water ran from a faucet. "I don't want no—trouble," he said.

The chess-board blurred and ran away like colored water. "Dad looked so white and funny at breakfast today. Why should he feel that way over a wax doll, Grandma? And Mom, she looks like she's all twisted up like a spring inside a clock, ready to bust loose. That's no way to act over a doll, is it?"

Grandma deliberated over her bishop, withdrawn into herself like an old hermit crab in a shell of lace. "There was no body. Just your imagination. Forget

it. Forget it." She glared at the child as if he were responsible. "Walk light from now on, sonny. Keep quiet and keep out of the way and forget it. Someone's got to tell you these things. Don't know why it's always me. But just forget it!"

They played chess until twilight. Then the house got dark again too quickly, everybody hurried through supper, and it seemed that everybody went to bed early, too.

Johnny listened to the hours chiming out, one by one. Someone rapped on the door. Johnny said, "Who is it?"

"Uncle Flinny."

"What do you want, Uncle Flinny!"

"Time for your bedtime story, Johnny."

"Oh, well—not tonight, please, Uncle Flinny."

"Yes. Please. This is a very special story. A very extra special bedtime story."

Johnny waited. Then: "I'm tired, Uncle Flinny. Some other time, huh? Not tonight, please."

Uncle Flinny went away and after awhile the clock chimed again. It was after ten. More time. After eleven. More time. Almost twelve.

Johnny opened the door.

• • •

The house was completely asleep. You could tell by the quiet, untouched gleam on the long hall stairs, clear moonlight pouring through great areas of glass, and no shadow moving.

Johnny closed the door behind him. From off somewhere in a quiet land, Grandma breathed heavily in her great four-postered bed. There was a tinkling noise, very faintly, as if bottles were being cautiously rattled behind Cousin William's door.

Johnny paused at the staircase. All he had to do would be return to bed and forget about it, believe that it was all a mistake, and there would be no trouble. It would be forgotten and things would take up where they'd been a few days ago.

Mother would laugh at her parties. Dad would drive back and forth to the office with his thick briefcase. Grandma would sneak her brandy on the side. Cousin William would insert needles into mannikin flesh, and Uncle Flinny would go on forever telling his feverish bedtime stories that meant nothing.

Yet it was not so easy as that. Things could not go back now. Only ahead. You *can't* forget. Dad, his only friend, was a stranger now, since the—incident. Mother was worse than ever. Her eyes looked like they cried at night. Down under the glitter she had to live, too. And Grandma, she'd drink two bottles, instead of one bottle of brandy a week. And Cousin William, every time he stuck a pin into a mannikin, he'd think of the Trunk Lady, blanch, cringe and start whimpering over his cognac.

And she—the lovely dark-haired stranger in the musty trunk had looked so lonely up there where he'd found her. So apart. There was a bond between them. She was a stranger to the house—and was killed for it. Johnny was a stranger in the house now, too. He wanted to find her again, because of that. They were almost brother and sister. She needed finding. She needed to be remembered, not to be forgotten.

Johnny went down each step with careful footing. He clung to the bannister, sliding his fingers. She would not be in the attic now, nor would she be in any of the upstairs rooms. How could *they* sleep with her so near them . . . . Downstairs perhaps. Somewhere in the accumulated night of the house. Not in the servants quarters.

He had just reached the stair bottom when he heard one of the upstairs doors open very slowly and close. After that there was not a sound, but quite calmly, quietly, someone came and stood at the top of the stairs, looking down.

Johnny froze. He leaned against the wall like a shadow. Sweat came out on his face, and trickled in the small palms of his hands. He could not see who it was. They just stood there, watching, looking down, silent and waiting.

Things had to go on. You can't lie in bed and forget. Johnny couldn't just forget the stranger, the Trunk Lady, in her lonely attitude of death. The murderer, too, could not forget easily—nor that there was a small boy in the house who was too curious, too incautious.

Johnny breathed very slowly. He waited a moment. Then, when he saw that the person at the top of the stairs was not coming down, he moved quickly down the hall, into the kitchen, and out the back door into the moonlit veldt of the garden.

The swimming pool lay flat and shining square, with a fringe of trees beyond it, stars over it, the bathhouse near it, the low garden rows to left and right. Farther down was the greenhouse and the garden toolshed. Johnny ran.

The shadows of the toolshed offered temporary haven. Looking back, he detected no movement in the house, no light. The body would most probably be in one of these outlying houses.

His bed would feel nice, now. The lock on the door would be nice. Johnny trembled like the water in the pool. Suddenly, he saw someone standing in the upstairs hall window. There was just a hint of a standing figure there. Looking down, as it had looked from the top of the stairs. . . Then—it was gone.

Now, down the gravel drive on the side of the house, footsteps sounded. Someone was coming from the front of the house, around under the sycamores. Someone moving in sycamore shadows, stealthily and unseen.

Then, very suddenly, breaking into half-light, *she* was there. She! Not Mother, nor Grandmother. But emerging half into moonlight, half in flecked shadow—was the Trunk Lady.

. . .

She looked at Johnny, far across the garden, and said nothing.

Johnny swallowed, tightly, and blinked. He held onto himself, his thighs, his knees with clenched fingers. He crouched and squinted and stared in raw disbelief. A night wind set the sycamore leaves to shivering. From a way off an auto horn hooted like a lonely owl.

She was not dead, after all. The whole house had tried to fool him. This was some fantastic jest he could not understand. They were all against him. His teacher was *alive*! There was no murder, no death! She was here, for him alone! In his hour of loneliness, she was here!

He darted out into the moonlight. Panting, not yelling, not laughing, he ran toward her across the grass, to the tiles of the swimming pool, across the tiles, around the pool and toward the sycamores.

She stood waiting for him, arms outstretched to take him into their soft embrace, sycamore shadows stirring over her cocktail dress, setting it into dreamy motion.

He said, "Ellie, is that you?"

He reached the rim of stirring shadow and screamed. The universe seemed to explode. The cocktail dress whirled madly, toppling in a drunken insanity. The Trunk Lady bent and there came a hoarse, panting sound. She was fainting.

No! She was falling! A shadow hit him across the face, jarring his senses, once, twice, three times. He fell to his knees and before he could rise, fingers were over his face, fingers that numbed him, gripping tight his sobbing mouth.

Mother!

The thought slammed him! Mother, dressed in the Trunk Lady's cocktail dress. Decoying him out into her arms, fooling him.

"Mother, don't kill me! Don't kill me!" he tried to cry. "I'm sorry I tried to bring the police! Mother, you love father—is that why you killed Ellie? Mother, let me go! Mother, you looked so much like *her* standing in the sycamore shadows!"

But the hands would not let him go. There was a rushing, a body against him. A series of shocks. The fingers were so strong, so much thicker than they should be. Much thicker! Johnny screamed inwardly, drawing air in an awful slobbering whistle.

The house leaned over him as if to collapse and crush him in its fall. The great old sleeping house with everyone sleeping in it, unaware that this silent struggle was happening by the flat shine of the pool.

Suddenly, he realized that it was not Mother, not the Trunk Lady. The fingers were too strong. Who is stronger than Mother, sterner, more quick and hard?

Grandmother, perhaps?

. . .

The body was too hard against him. He half broke free and saw the flat of moonlight, the filmy cocktail dress lying alone, sprawled—and a mannikin hand thrown out into light. The mannikin was on the ground, dead, plastic, cold. Someone else was behind Johnny, holding, fighting.

Cousin William!

But there was no smell of cognac. The actions were the actions of a sober man. The breath was clean and clear and quick, almost sobbing.

Father!

"Dad," he tried to yell. "Don't, don't, please *don't*!"

Then a voice was talking. Something black and small clattered on the tiles beside the swirling water, and Johnny suddenly *knew.* The hands were tight, the voice tighter, whispering: "You hurt your mother!"

"I didn't mean to," Johnny screamed inwardly.

"If it hadn't been for you," said the voice, whispering, "your mother would never have known about the Dark One dying!"

"I didn't mean to find the Trunk Lady," cried Johnny silently, fighting.

"It'll *kill* her, the shock of it. If she dies, I won't want to live. She's all I've had ever since twenty years ago when it all happened!"

The voice husked on: "Ellie came to the party. They tried to fool me, make out she was somebody else. But I guessed. She came upstairs in her cocktail gown and I gave her a glass of brandy with sleeping powder in it, and I put her to gentle sleep in the old old trunk. Nobody would have known if *you* hadn't looked. Ellie would have just disappeared forever. Only Grandma and me would know! But you're Dark, too, you're Dark, just like Ellie!" the voice whispered. "Sometimes, when I look at you, I see *her* face! So, now—"

The Dark One. Johnny's mind spun, ached, and thrust to get free. *Uncle Flinny!*

Uncle Flinny, he thought. Why do you call Ellie the Dark One? Why? Your bedtime stories, Uncle Flinny. For so many years you've told the same story, the same strange story about the Dark One and the beautiful woman, and now the Dark One came to be my teacher, and why did you kill her! What did she do to *you?* Why do you call her the Dark One? What does the bedtime story mean? I don't know.

"Don't kill me, Uncle Flinny. The water's cold and shining tonight. I don't want to be under the cold shine of it."

Johnny grabbed onto the body behind him and fell forward. The two of them plunged screaming into the pool. There was a great plunging nausea. The fingers released him. There was a fighting in the wet darkness, water stabbing his nostrils, bubbles breaking from his lips.

When Johnny broke surface there was a great sound of air rising from below, a dim surging of an old man jerking against the lazy tide. The man never came to the surface again. Just the bubbles came. . . .

Johnny was crying, screaming to himself as he dragged himself from the pool and saw her lying there so lonely and tired—the mannikin in the cocktail dress. His foot knocked something dark and small rolling on the tiles. He picked it up. One of the dark chess pieces Uncle Flinny was always stealing from the chess set in Grandma's room.

Johnny held it tight, not seeing it really, and looked at the pool with the slowing ripples on it, where Uncle Flinny slept below. It was crazy, so crazy he couldn't stand it.

He looked at the house through blurred eyes, and he was shaking like a sick dog. Lights were clicking on all over it. Windows in squares of yellow and orange. Father was running downstairs, shouting, and the back-door was opening, just as Johnny collapsed, sobbing, upon the cold hard tiles. . . .

. . .

Mother sat on one side of the bed, Dad on the other side. Johnny got his crying all out of him and lay back and looked at Dad, then Mom. "Mom?"

She said nothing, but smiled weakly and held onto his hands so tightly.

"Mom, oh, Mom," Johnny said. "I'm so tired, but I can't sleep. Why? Why, Dad?" He looked at Dad again. "Dad, what happened? I don't know."

Dad found it hard to say. He said it anyway. "Uncle Flinny was married twenty years ago. His wife died when their baby was born. Uncle Flinny loved his wife very much. She was very beautiful and good. Uncle Flinny hated the baby. He'd have nothing to do with it. He thought the baby was a murderer. You can understand how he felt, can't you? You can understand how *I'd* feel if mother died?"

Johnny nodded weakly, not too sure at all that he understood.

"Uncle Flinny put the baby in a girl's home somewhere. He wouldn't tell us where. She grew up, bitter, hating Uncle Flinny because he treated her unfairly. After all, she didn't ask to be born. You see, son?" he said.

"Yeah, Dad."

"Well, just a month ago, Ellie, the baby, grown up now, found out where we lived, somehow. She wrote a letter. We offered her a job as your teacher, which was only right and deserving. We thought to keep it secret from your uncle. When Ellie came, and went upstairs during the party, Uncle Flinny guessed who she was."

Dad couldn't speak for a moment. He closed his eyes. "Then—you found her in the attic. We tried to keep it quiet. We tried to make you forget. It was no use. We could never forget, ourselves. It was bound to come out. There was so much at stake, though, all our lives, we tried to work it out quietly. Things like money and reputations and business and what people would say, made us do it, son . . . And—really—they're not worth a damn!"

Johnny turned his head. "I kept poking my nose in—"

"You were our conscience, I guess. A rather active symbol. You kept the house stirred up. Uncle Flinny thought you were hurting your mother. Your mother—his sister—was all he had after his wife's death."

"So he tried to make it look like I was drowned in the pool—"

Mother suddenly bent and held onto Johnny, closely. "I'm sorry, Johnny. Sometimes we're blind. I didn't think he'd do that."

"What about the police?"

"The truth. Flinny killed her and commited suicide."

Mother's voice seemed distant and removed and tired. Johnny heard himself talking: "Uncle Flinny used to tell me bedtime stories, Mom. I still don't understand. All about the Dark One and the beautiful wife, and—"

"Someday when you're older, you'll understand. Poor Ellie. She was always the Dark One."

Things were fading away, away. It was all over, done. "No more bedtime stories, Mom, please. No more, huh?"

Out of the tired darkness, Mom said, "No more, Johnny."

Johnny rolled wearily over into dreams. His left hand opened and the small black object in it fell clattering to the bedroom floor. He was asleep even before the Black Knight ceased rolling.

NINETEEN

JACK-IN-THE-BOX

Let us imagine a Jack-in-the-box, stuffed, compressed in upon its coiled body, its head hard against a locked lid. Oh, how the springs ache to relax, to fling the Jack out of the box, bang! but no, all is tension and imprisonment. The lid stays locked thirteen years on the little trapped animal. The animal within does not know of the World, but senses it is there; not with eye, or ear, or flesh, nor by nostril, but by a sense that grew simply because the little animal has been jailed so long. Anyway, here is the boxed Jack, coiled and tightened and neurotic, head crushed to locked lid, waiting and waiting and waiting to be shot out, as from a cannon.

• • •

Edwin stood looking out the window. He could not see beyond the trees. The trees surrounded the house and the house surrounded Edwin. If he tried to find another World beyond, why the trees grew thicker in an instant, almost, to still this odd and silly notion of his.

Edwin stared out the window this way each morning.

Behind him, he heard Mother's waiting, nervous breath as she drank her breakfast coffee. She rang the emptied cup with her spoon. "Edwin, stop staring. Come eat!"

"No," he said, not knowing why.

There was a stiffened rustle. Mother turned to him as if she'd been slapped. "What do you *mean?* Breakfast's ready, isn't it? Or is the window better?"

"It's better, it's better," he said. He pressed the window with his nose, eyes feverish for some life, *out there.* For thirteen years he had looked for life beyond the trees, seen none. He'd heard only vague noises. "It's *better,*" he whispered, once again.

But finally he turned and went to eat the tasteless apricots and toast. He and Mother, alone, just like five thousand other mornings. Thirteen years of breakfasts and no movement beyond the trees and a growing curiosity.

The two of them ate silently.

She was the pale woman you saw in old houses in third floor cupola windows, each morning at nine, each afternoon at one and four, each evening at eight, and, also, if you happened to be passing at three in the morning, there she would be, in her window, silent and white, high and alone and quiet. It was like passing a deserted greenhouse in which one last wild white blossom lifted its head to the moonlight.

And her child, Edwin, was the thistle you unpodded with a breath of your mouth in thistle-time. His hair was silken and his eyes were of a constant blue and feverish temperature. He had a haunted look. He looked as if he slept poorly. He might fly all apart like a packet of ladyfinger firecrackers if you said the right word.

So here they were at breakfast. He with his fever in him, she with hers forever dead in her, save for occasional sparkles.

Now she began to talk, slowly at first, then very rapidly and angrily, almost spitting at him. "Why must you disobey every morning?" She cried at him. "I don't want you staring out, I don't want it, do you hear? What do you want? Do you want to see Them?" she cried, her fingers twitching. She was blazingly lovely, like an angry white flower. "Do you want to see the Beasts that run down paths and crush people like strawberries! Is *that* it?"

Yes, he thought, I'd like to see the Beasts, horrible as they are.

He said nothing.

"Do you want to go *out there?*" she asked, sharply. "Do you want to go out there like your Father did before you were born and be killed, be run down by one of those terrible Beasts on the road, is *that* what you want! *Answer* me!"

He looked at the floor. "No, Ma'm."

"Isn't it enough your Father died that way? Isn't it enough that They killed him? Why should you want to have anything to do with those terrible Things? How many times must I tell you?" She motioned toward the door. "Of course, if you really *want* to die—go ahead. *Be* killed."

She quieted at last, but her fingers kept flexing. "Your Father built this World, every part of it. It was good enough for him and it should be enough for you. There's nothing beyond those trees but death and I won't have you poking your nose out. This *is* the World, remember. There's no other worth bothering with!"

He nodded miserably.

"Don't do it again," she said. She ate for a few seconds and then looked up. "You're forgiven. It's silly to think there could possibly be anything worth seeing beyond the trees. Smile now, and finish your toast."

He ate softly, with the window reflected where he could stare secretly at it, upon his spoon. After a long time he glanced up.

"Mom?" he asked, carefully.

"Yes?" She was wary.

"What's—?" He couldn't say it. He swallowed. "What's—dying? You talk about it all the time. Is it a—*feeling?*"

"To those who have to live on after someone else, a very *bad* feeling, yes." She stood up, warningly. "Stop chattering; you'll be late for school. Run!"

He kissed her as he ran by with his books. "Bye!"

"Say hello to Teacher for me!" she cried after him.

. . .

He fled from her like a bullet from a gun. Up endless staircases. Along passages and through halls, past windows that cascaded down dark gallery walls like waterfalls. Up and up through the layer cake of the World, with the thick frosting of Oriental rugs between and the bright candles on top.

From one high staircase he looked down through four intervals of World.

The Lowlands of Kitchen, dining room, living room. The two Middle Lands of music, play, pictures, and locked, forbidden rooms. And then, *here*—he turned and stared about—the Highlands of adventure, picnic, school. Here he roamed, skipped, sang lonely child songs on the long brisk journey to his Teacher.

This was the World. Father (or God, as Mother often called him) had raised its mountains of wall-papered plaster long ago. There were foothills of stairs, forested with banisters. This was Father-God's World; in which star firmaments shone at the flick of a wall switch. And the sun was Mother, and Mother was the sun, the center about which all the World steadfastly revolved. And Edwin, like a small dark meteor, tore through all the carpeted and tapestried spaces of the World. You saw him coming and going on vast staircases, on hikes and explorations.

This *was* the World, enchanted square countries between boundaries of nailed lath and polished wood. Unknown lands and wild lands and some lands hidden.

Sometimes he and Mom picnicked in the Highlands, spread snow linens on red-tuffed Persian scrolled lawns, upon the crimson carpeting of a meadow in a top plateau of the house where ancient portraits of dissatisfied peoples looked dimly down upon their eating and their revels. They drew water from silver taps in hidden tiled niches, and crashed the tumblers against the wall in dual demonstration. They played Hide and Seek and she found him rolled like a mummy in a window curtain on the fourth level. Once he got lost and wandered for hours in insane countries of dust and sheeted furniture and echoes. But she found him at last and took him back down through the layers and stratas of countries, to the familiar Parlor land where each dust particle was exact and familiar as a snow flake.

He ran up a stair.

There were doors to knock on, a thousand thousand doors, most of them locked and forbidden. There were bottom-tempting banisters to slide on. And there were Picasso ladies and Dali gentlemen who screamed silently at him

from their canvas asylums, their golden eyes fierce, when he dawdled.

"These sorts of Things live *out there,*" his mother told him one day, pointing to the Dali-Picasso people in their frames.

He stuck his tongue at them now, and ran quickly past.

He stopped running.

One of the forbidden doors stood open.

Sunlight slanted through it and warmed and excited him.

He put out his hand to the knob, and stood twisting it. He looked in. Beyond the door, a spiral staircase screwed around and up into sun and silence. His eyes darted up like birds, flying and twining on the circular stair into forbidden, sun-mellowed heights.

He flung his books down without even thinking and ran in and climbed the stars up and around and up around until his knees ached and his breath fountained in and out, and his head banged like a bell with the effort, and at last he reached the terrible summit of the climb and stood in a sun-drenched tower to look out upon a *new* World!

"It's there!" he gasped, running from window to window in exultant discovery. "It's there!"

He was above the sombre tree barrier. For the first time in thirteen enclosed years he was high over the windy chestnuts and elms and as far as his eye could stretch he saw green and green grass and green trees and white ribbons on which beetles ran, and the other half of the world was blue and endless, with a sun in it like a navel, like an incredible deep blue room. It was so vast he felt as if he were falling, and screamed, and held onto the tower ledge, and beyond the trees, beyond the white ribbons where the beetles ran he saw things like fingers sticking up, but he didn't see any Picasso-Dali creatures, but he did see little red-white-and-blue handkerchiefs blowing in a slow wind on high white poles.

He was going to be sick. Great whitenesses moved across the eternal blue room over him and birds flew like bullets, shrilling.

Turning, he almost fell flat down the stairs.

Slamming the forbidden door at the bottom he heard the lock snap tight. He fell against the door.

"You'll go blind," he told himself, hysterically, hands to eyes. "You shouldn't have seen. You'll go blind!"

In the hall, gasping, staring, he waited for the blindness.

. . .

A minute later he stared from an ordinary Highlands window, and saw only his *own* familiar World. The high wall of elms, chestnuts and hickories, the stone fence in the vast garden below. He had always taken the forest to be a wall beyond which was nothing but terror, nothingness, and Beings. Now he knew his

World didn't end with the wall. There was more to the World than the Continent of Kitchen, the Parlor Archipelago, the Peninsula of Learning, the Music Hall (he could hear mother brightly speaking each of these clever names for places!).

He tried the locked door again.

Had he really gone up? Or was it a dream? Had he seen that half green, half blue vastness?

What if God had seen him now? Edwin trembled at the thought. God, who'd built this house, timber on timber. God, who had smoked a mysterious black pipe and had a shiny magic cane to walk with. God, who had made Edwin and the World, and who might be watching, even now.

He looked around. "I can still see," he told himself, thankfully. "I can still *see*."

. . .

Nine thirty, a good half hour late, he rapped at the School.

The door swung open.

"Good morning, Teacher."

Teacher Granleigh stood inside.

"You're late, Edwin."

"I'm sorry."

Teacher was unchanged. She wore the tall grey thick-clothed monk's robe, the cowl up over her head. She wore the silver spectacles and the grey gloves. "Come in," she said.

Beyond her the land of books burned in colors from the hearth. There were walls bricked with books, and a hearth wide enough to stand in without bumping your head, and a blazing log for heat.

The door closed behind the aching boy.

God had been here. Once He had sat at that desk, there. Once He'd walked this floor, touched these books. God had stuffed that pipe with tobacco bits and puffed it. God had stood looking out that window. This was God's room, and it smelled of Him; rubbed wood, tobacco-leather and silver spurs.

Edwin's face became a pale and peaceful thing.

Here, his heart slowed. Here, he relaxed. Teacher's voice sang like a little harp, telling of God, the old days, and the World when it had shaken with God's determination and trembled at his wit. Teacher told of the days when the World skeleton was freshly blueprinted by His fingers, a pencil slash here, a loud, decisive word there, an argument, and, finally, timber rising, nail, plaster, paper and crystal. God's fingerprints still lay on little pencils under glass. Teacher never touched them. The fingerprints must be left intact! she said.

Here, in the Highlands, Edwin learned what was expected of him and his body. He was to grow into a Presence. He was to fit the odors of God and the voice of God, he was one day to stand tall and dark and very malignantly pale

by that window and make the house boom with his shout. He was to be God, himself, and nothing was to stop this. Not the sky or the trees or the Things beyond the trees.

Teacher moved like a vapour in the room.

"Why were you late, Edwin?"

"I don't know."

"I'll ask you again," she said. "Why were you late?"

"Because." He looked at the floor so as not to see her. "I found a door. It was open. One of the forbidden ones."

"A door!" Teacher Granleigh sank into a large carved chair, concerned, her glasses flashing lights off them.

Her eyes had suddenly grown intense, as if she didn't understand, or was afraid to understand.

Edwin felt drops of sweat collecting in the hollows of his eyes. "Yes. I went in!" he said, swiftly, to get the pain over.

"I won't hurt you," she said. "I won't hurt you," she insisted. "Just tell me which door, where, it must be locked."

They had always been friends. Was the friendship over? Had he spoiled things? He felt like crying.

"The door by the Dali-Picasso people. There was sunlight and steps and I climbed up, I'm sorry, I'm sorry," he said in deep misery. "Don't tell Mother, please, please!"

She sat lost in her chair, her face vanishing deep back into the hollow of her grey cowl, the glasses making only a faint glitter. "And what did you see?" she asked.

"A big blue room."

"Did you?"

"And a green one. And ribbons!" He tried to make it sound unimportant to himself, but there was no stopping the eagerness and wonder behind the words.

"Ribbons?"

"Ribbons with bugs running on them. Like those little ladybugs that crawl on my hand."

"*And* bugs running on the ribbons," she repeated it, as if that was the last straw.

It made him sad, her voice. She sounded as if she'd lost a precious something. He wanted to make her happy.

"But I didn't stay long," he said, eagerly. "I came right down and slammed the door and locked it myself and won't go up again!"

"You won't?" Her lips, faintly moved in the shadowed cowl, were doubtful.

"No'm."

"But now you've seen," she said wearily, "and you'll want to see more."

"M'am?"

She shook her head. Then she leaned forward and asked a question to which she wanted a negative answer, he could tell by her tone: "And—did you *like* what you saw?"

"M'am?"

"The blue room, the blue room, child, did you like it?"

"I don't know." He fidgeted, trying not to think. Then he thought of a solution, a way out. "I was scared."

She relaxed visibly. "Were you?"

"Yes'm, It was *big!*"

"It is big, Edwin, too big, uncomfortable, not like *this* world, and it's very uncertain, Edwin, remember."

"Yes'm," he said, wistfully.

"But why did you climb the stairs when you knew they were behind a forbidden door?"

He knew the answer, but hid it, trembling. "I don't know."

"There *must* be a reason."

The fire bloomed and withered and bloomed on the hearth and she waited ten long seconds. And finally he went to the little hiding place in his mind and took out the reason and without looking at teacher said, very low, "Mom."

"Your mother? She makes you—unhappy?"

"I don't know, oh, I don't know," he wailed. It was going to be good to cry, to tell someone, to get it over with and rest. "She—she," he gasped, and drew his knees tight to his bosom, misery embraced. "She's all funny, all funny."

"Nervous?"

"Yes, yes."

"Touchy, unbearable, tight, tense, is that it?"

The words were correct buttons, pushed. He let go.

"Yes!" It was a sin to admit such things of mother and he wailed and covered his face, got his hands all wet and sticky, biting and crying on them. But he wasn't saying the words, now, she said them, and all he had to do was agree between sobs. "Yes, yes, oh, yes!"

"She runs about, funny, does she? And snaps at you and holds onto you, too tight? And sometimes—you want to be alone?"

Yes, to all of them! It was very sad, he loved mother dearly!

"That's what makes you want to run away by yourself? Because she demands all your thoughts and every thing you do?"

Teacher was a million years old. "We learn," she said to herself, wearily. Rousing fitfully from her chair she walked with a slow swaying, grey robes awhisper, to a pen and paper on the desk and wrote words out. "We learn, Oh God, but slowly, and with much pain. We think we do things right, and all the time we're killing the plan." She looked up at him swiftly. He was caught with wet-rimmed, curious eyes.

"You're growing up?" she said, not as a question, but as a heavy statement of circumstance. She finished the note. "Take this to your mother. It tells her to let you have two full hours to yourself every afternoon, to prowl where you wish. Except—out *there.*" She stopped. "Are you listening to me, child?"

He wiped away the tears. "Teacher. Did Mom lie to me? I mean about out there, and the Things?"

"Look at me," she said. He looked. She moved her cowl ever so little. "I've been your friend, and never beaten you, as your mother sometimes has had to. Both of us are here to help you understand. We don't want you destroyed as God was destroyed."

Color from the hearth washed her face.

Edwin gasped.

She looked familiar. The lines were erased by the firelight and she was revealed.

She looked like his mother!

His heart leaped against his ribs.

She noticed him. "What were you going to say?"

"The fire," he looked at the fire and back at her face and the cowl jerked away from his gaze, the face vanished in blackness. "You look like Mom. I guess I'm funny."

She walked swiftly to the books on the shelves, took one down. "You know women look alike," she said, fumbling with it. "Forget it." She breathed harshly. "Here." She brought him a book. "Read from the first chapter of the Diary."

Edwin read. The fire rumbled and sucked itself brilliantly up the flue, the grey cowl settled and nodded and quieted, the face in it like a clapper in a solemn bell. The firelight ignited the little animal lettering on the shelved books. Those books from which pages had been razored and torn and censored, from which certain lines had been inked or erased, from which all pictures had been ripped, some books glued shut, or locked in bronze straps, because Edwin might see, read, understand. He read from the Diary:

"In the Beginning there was God. Who created the World with all its corridors and rooms and lands. With His hands he formed for his pleasure his loving wife and much later the child Edwin who was to be a God himself, after a number of years . . .."

Teacher nodded and Edwin read on.

. . .

Down the banisters, breathless, he slid into the Parlor.

"Mom!"

She lay in a plump maroon chair, very like bone china. She was breathing hard as if she'd been running, and perspiring.

"Mom, you're wet!"

"Oh, hello," she said, looking at him as if it was his fault she had been running and was wet. "Nothing, nothing." Then she took him and kissed his cheeks. "Forgive me, darling. I'm a weasel. I have a great surprise for you. Your birthday is coming!"

"So soon? But it's only been ten months."

"Tomorrow it is, anyway. Do us wonders. I *say* so. Anything *I say* is true, my dear."

"And we open another room?" Dazed.

"The fourteenth room! Fifteenth room next year, and so on to your twenty-first birthday when we'll open the most important room and you'll be man of the House, God, Father, Head of the World!"

"Whee!" He tossed his books.

They laughed. It echoed and shook crystals in all the continents.

. . .

Edwin lay on his moonlit bed. Beyond his open window was the World's edge. Beyond was the blue world and the green where the Wicked Killers lived.

Tomorrow, his birthday. Why? Was he a good boy? No. Why, then? Because things were—nervous. Yes. That was it. Because they needed his birthday to cheer and calm them.

He sensed that the birthdays would come swifter, sooner from now on. The house was knotting up. Things were tight, like fists. Mom laughed too high and too much and there was a wild light in her eyes.

Would Teacher be invited? No! Mom and she'd never met. "Why not, Mom?" "Because," said Mom. "Don't you want to meet Mom, Teacher?" "Some day," said Teacher.

Where'd teacher go nights? To one of the secret rooms? Or out into *there?* He looked at the wall of trees. Hardly.

His eyes closed.

Last year, when things had got nervous, Mom had advanced his birthday then, too.

Some night, he dreamed, I'll go to the Highlands and see if Teacher's really there *all* the time.

Think of something else. God. God building this Land. Think of the hour of His death when the metal thing on the concrete road crushed and killed Him because it was jealous of Him.

Oh, how the World must have *rocked* with His passing.

One day, I'll be God. Mom says so.

He slept.

. . .

In the morning, bright voices below. In and out doors they moved. Edwin listened against the door that was bolted from outside; it was always bolted on festive days until the voices stopped below. Edwin scowled. *Whose* voices? They must be God's workers. They couldn't be Dali People from out there! Mom hated them with perfumed fury. Silence.

"Happy Birthday!"

Mom danced him about the party table. Cakes and ices and strawberries and hams and beefs and pink drinks in tall glasses and his name on a snowy white cake and his age in red numbers. He was stunned.

"Where'd it come from?"

"Where all food comes from," sang Mom, cryptically, swirling her green party gown. She plinked the piano in the music room and sang him Happy Birthday to You, Happy Birthday, Dear Edwin, Happy Birthday To—

Wild fanatical joy. Down with the drinks and on with the dance. She was afraid to stop.

With a silver key she unlocked the fourteenth, forbidden door. Hold your breath!

The door slid into the wall.

Disappointment. This fourteenth birthday room was hardly worth looking at. On his sixth birthday it had been the school in the Highlands. Seventh birthday? The playroom in the Lowlands. Eighth? The music room. Ninth: the kitchen all glittery chrome. Tenth birthday—the phonograph room where angels sang from moving discs. Eleventh: the garden room, a grass plot with a carpet that really *grew,* and had to be cut instead of swept. Twelfth and thirteenth birthdays, the wonders of Mom's cosmetic room and a new room for himself. Now, keenly disappointed, he looked into the fourteenth room. A dim brown closet. They stepped in.

Mom laughed. "You don't know how magic it is. Shut the door."

Hastily she poked red buttons on one wall.

"Mother!" he screamed.

The wall slid down. The room moved.

She soothed him. "Hush, darling."

Horrified, he watched the wall sink down into the floor, taking the door with it. Another door appeared and then another. The room stopped. Mother pointed at the strange new door. "Open it."

He opened it and stood paralyzed.

"Where's the parlor? How'd we get here? This is the Highlands!"

"We flew! From now on, once a week, you'll fly to school instead of taking the long way round."

"Oh, Mother, Mother!"

. . .

They idled deliciously in the sweet grass of the garden, sipping wide saucers of apple cider, their elbows on crimson silk cushions, their feet, with the shoes kicked off, wriggling in the tickly dandelions. Mom jumped three times when she heard a Monster roaring beyond the trees. One of those Monsters that had run down and killed God. "I'll protect you," said Edwin. "Thank you," she said, with polite uneasiness.

Beyond the trees, Chaos waited. Metal beasts shouted mating calls. Mom shivered, convulsed her sequin shawl with her fingers. Once, they sighted a chromium bird thing flying through the blue rift in the trees, humming.

From the garden, a double path ran into oblivion, between the trees. Down it, mother whispered tensely over her cider, the beasts snuffled at night, waiting to mash Edwin.

"See?" she pointed. "Their droppings."

He saw the oily pools like molasses between the double tracks.

Crackle, crackle, crackle. The birthday ended like cellophane burnt to nothing.

At sunset in the Parlor security, mother inhaled champagne with her tiny, seedling nostrils and her little eye of a mouth. She hiccupped with a soft flourish of her breasts. Drowsy wild, she herded the cider-sober Edwin to his room, and a moment later on her way downstairs dropped a champagne bottle two flights.

He undressed in wonder. This year. Next. And which room two years, three years from now? The beasts. Being mashed. God. Killed. What was killed? What was death? Was death a feeling? Did God enjoy it? Was death a journey?

Below, another champagne bottle shattered.

. . .

Morning was a cool smell in the room. Downstairs, food was probably manifesting in a finger-snap on the table.

Edwin washed and dressed. He outlined the day in his mind. Breakfast, school, lunch, an hour in the music room at the piano, phonograph for an hour, then perhaps an hour or two with the electrical games that shot back at him and Mom, then tea in the Outlands. Then— He remembered the note. He picked it up. He'd forgotten to give it to Mom. He'd give it to her now. She'd have to let him run around the World by himself from tea-time until supper. Then, this evening, he might go up to School again where he and Teacher prowled the censored library together and he'd puzzle which words and thoughts about that world out there had been censored from his eyes.

He opened the door. There was an unusual silence in the World. He expected to find Mom gay, happy, relaxed, waiting for him. The hall was empty.

Down through the dells of the World a vapour hung like a light, unmoving veil. There was a silence which no footstep broke; the hills were quiet, the silver founts did not pulse in the first sunlight, and the balustrade lifted its sinuous neck up up the stairs like some pre-historic monster, to peer into his room. . . .

He walked downstairs to the parlor.

From the parlor, he walked to the dining room.

"Good morning, Mother."

Mother slept in her shining green dress on the floor, a glass still clasped in one hand. The hearth was littered with glass bits, nearby.

"Mother?"

Her face was pale, relaxed, and she enjoyed some dream.

Not wanting to disturb her he sat at the table and was shocked to find it empty. All his life there'd been food on it, but not this morning. He looked blankly at it.

Earlier, he'd heard a beast baying outside the kitchen door. Insistently. Why?

He went to Mother.

"Mother, wake up, wake up."

He paid no attention. She'd had spells before of stubbornness, but now she would not move.

"Shall I go to school? I'm hungry."

He sat on the chair for half an hour waiting for the food to appear like magic. It didn't.

"Well," he said, finally. "You just sleep, mother. I'm going up to school."

The Highlands were gloomy and shadowed. The white glass suns that shone in the ceilings no longer glowed. It was a day of sullen fog in the World, up the dark corridors, on the soft, silent stairs, through dim, dusty rooms Edwin wandered, a sense of overwhelming wrongness seizing on him. Things were changing.

He rapped and rapped again at the School door. The door drifted in, whining, of its own accord.

The school was dark. The hearth stones were cold; no fire hid in its cavern to throw shadows on the high ceiling. The blinds were drawn at the windows. The books sat upon the shelves. There was not a sound.

"Teacher?"

He drew the blinds.

"Teacher Granleigh?"

Everything was flat and empty. A faint colony of dust particles trickled down a melancholy shaft of sunlight that fell upon the floor.

Edwin put out his hands as if to normalize things. He wanted the fire to crack open like a popcorn kernel, blooming to life. He shut his eyes to give Teacher time to appear. He opened them and was stupefied at what he saw on the desk.

Neatly folded was the grey cowl and the grey robe, atop which gleamed the silver spectacles, and one grey glove. He touched them. One grey glove was gone.

There were also two pieces of some greasy chalk that made a mark on the back of his hand when he used it.

He drew back, staring at Teacher's empty robe, the glasses, the greasy chalk. His hand fell upon a doorknob in a door which had always been locked, on the far side of the room. The door swung open, revealing another of those small, moving rooms.

"Teacher?" He walked into it. The door slid shut.

Pressing a button made it move and with it moved a slow awful coldness, of fear, of silence, of the World grown so very quiet. Teacher gone, and mother—sleeping. Down sank the room, purring like a cat, then it clashed some machinery, and another room opened before him as he pushed the door. He stepped out.

The dining room!

Behind him was not a door, but a tall, six foot book-case from which he'd emerged. Edwin blinked rapidly.

And Mother lay sleeping, untouched, uncaring, upon the floor. And folded under her, barely showing, he noticed for the first time, was one of Teacher's soft grey gloves.

He stood over her, staring down at the grey glove.

. . .

After awhile he began to whimper.

The table was bare. He shouted for it to fill with food. It did not. He called to Mother. She didn't move. He ran back up to the Highlands again and the hearth was still cold, Teacher's robe still lay folded and empty, and one grey glove was missing. He waited. Teacher didn't come. He ran back down to the Lowlands, crying now. He sat by Mother and talked with her and felt the grey glove. The afternoon came and he was hungry.

The idea of hunger and loneliness engulfed him.

Teacher must be out in the Outlands somewhere, now. If he found her, he'd bring her back to wake mother so everything would be fine!

Through the kitchen, out back, he found late afternoon light and the beasts hooting beyond the rim of the World. He clung to the garden wall, not daring to let go, and then when nothing threatened, and sunlight warmed him as the hearth fire often had, he felt better. He heard the wind blow softly in the trees. He walked on the path. His feet slipped on the beast droppings and he stared far down the tunnel between the trees. Did he dare go beyond, out there?

"Teacher?"

He walked along the beast spoor a few yards.

"Teacher!"

Over his shoulder lay his World and its very new silence. From a distance he heard noises, sounds, beyond the trees. His mouth widened and his eyes

squinted fiercely. He walked some more, pausing, then going on. Behind, he was startled to see his World diminish. How small! Why? It had always been so large! He called again and again, and everything was new. Smells filled his nose, colors and shapes and sizes filled his eyes.

If I go beyond the trees I'll die, he thought. Mom said so. What's dying? What is it anyway, what's it like? Is it another room? A blue one? A green one? There's a big green one, ahead. Oh, Mother, Teacher.

His feet hurried, increased their pace, knowing not why. The legs that carried him were no longer his own; his voice, his yelling, belonged to something new. The path rushed under him, the Universe behind dwindled and vanished. He began to laugh. . . .

. . .

The policeman scratched his head and looked at the pedestrian.

"These kids. Honest to God, I can't figure them."

"How's that?" asked the pedestrian.

The policeman thought it over. "A second ago a little boy ran by. He laughed and cried all at the same time. He jumped up and down and *touched* things. Things like bushes and trees and little pieces of paper, and fire hydrants and dogs, and people. Things like sidewalks and gates and parked cars. Why, Christ, he even touched *me* to see if *I* was here, and he looked at the sky, all running tears, and he kept yelling something funny."

"What did he yell?" asked the pedestrian.

"He kept yelling, 'I'm dead, I'm dead, I'm glad I'm dead, I'm dead, I'm dead, it's *good* to be dead, I'm dead, I'm dead, I'm *glad* I'm dead!' One of them new kid's games, I guess."

TWENTY

WHERE EVERYTHING ENDS

In the old days a circus had dumped its ancient red wagons and yellow-painted cages into the canal. It looked as if a long parade had rolled and rumbled off the rim to pile up and rust brown under the grey motionless waters. There were about ten cages, wheels turned up, the paint of old years flaking like leaves from a calendar.

Steve Michaels stood on the edge of it, looking down and seeing it through a red mist.

Thirty years ago this was called Venice by the Sea, California. Like Italy. Gondolas had skimmed brightly, with green lanterns in the night, up and down, people singing, everything clean and new. That was all gone. Now it was a dump for empty cages.

Steve didn't know it was five in the afternoon. He didn't seem to notice the winter sun hung on a misty grey sky. The silence held onto him and wouldn't let him breathe.

All of a sudden Lisa was beside him. She made the winter air warm and sweet. Her voice was low,

"Steve, you can't stand here forever."

His grey eyes didn't look up.

"I can try."

"Come home to the L.A. office, Steve. You can come out again tomorrow."

"Yeah. After the funeral," Steve said, "I can come down and look at Charlie's bloodstains on the sidewalk. If it rains I can watch the rain wash them away." He stared at the concrete beneath his feet with its funny color. "I wish it could rain in my head and do the same."

Lisa waited. "Allright," she sighed. "What do we do?"

His shoulders came up. He threw away a dead cigarette he'd forgotten to use.

"Walk. Come on, Lisa. We're looking for a murderer who lives in a house on the canal."

They walked south.

The territory was familiar. Steve explained. "The houses start here, thick,

and peter out four miles down the coast. You find oil wells there, pumping, and the canal waters get dirty black with it. It—smells like old blood."

The cold light made Steve's face whiter, the skin of it boned tight on his cheeks, his eyes lonelier and colorless, and his hair blacker in contrast.

"While you were in El Monte yesterday, Lisa, someone phoned the office. An old man named Gerbelow who works an oil-well on the Venice flatlands, said he was being blackmailed. Blackmailer's alias is Markham. Funny things were happening."

"What things?"

"Accidents at night, to oil equipment. Someone slipping around in the dark doing it. Charlie figured whoever was responsible lived nearby the canal system, I guess. So many nights, funny hours. I stuck in the office. Charlie interviewed Gerbelow, first, then strolled along the whole canal system, looking for some clue to the setup—"

Lisa's hand tightened on his arm. "The papers said it was accidental. Charlie Brandon walked off the pavement in the dark, struck his head and drowned in six feet of water . . ."

Steve's jaw muscles tightened. "I let the cops think it was accidental, too. Didn't want them plowing around. This is *my* case, mine and Charlie's." He looked at all the mouse-colored houses, each a grey replica of its brother. One story flats with mist to tuck them in at twilight, and a salt wind blowing fury at morning. "Charlie must've figured some theory, walking around. I wish I knew what it was."

"Have you seen old man Gerbelow yet?"

"I phoned him and told him we'd be down. He said he'd only seen Markham once, a couple months ago when Markham first started his game. Gerbelow's got bad eyes. The only thing he said was that Markham had a young voice; young and cocky."

Steve walked faster.

"Is that where we're going, Steve? To Gerbelow's?"

"Yeah. It's a four mile walk. We can look for *things* on the way down."

Lisa shivered and half turned as they walked. It was almost completely dark now.

"Funny how you think someone's following you—and it's only the wind."

. . .

Four miles down, the canal begins to veer toward the sea. The beat of the ocean comes in a kind of salt anger upon piers, rocks and sand flats. There, the oil wells knit land and sea together with pumping black fingers. You hear them groaning, creaking over their work. You can't see what they're doing in the dark, but you hear them complaining all the while.

A wind raked away the fog-clouds for a moment, like pale leaves on a big dark lawn, to let stars come through like funny far away flowers coming in bud. Steve whistled through his teeth.

Lisa went with him toward this one particular oil well that was set back from the canal about a hundred yards among a dozen others that climbed up and up and didn't want to stop. An oil-well looks like the kind of thing the Guy uses to take down stars every night and shine them with with a rag; a regular ladder up.

There was a light shining in a small shack. The teeter-tauter of the oil-pump moved up and down, up and down with a sighing, creaking, blowing; like a nervous finger.

"Hey, Pop!"

No answer. Steve heard Lisa whimper and a moment later she held onto him and said, "There he is, Steve. Up there, with his head under the power-shaft."

It was no place for a head. Steve gagged as he climbed the ladder up and stood atop the machinery shed where old man Gerbelow lay like a man sleeping, his head stuck under a shaft that went up and down, up and down. Steve's eyes followed it, up, down, up, down, until they blurred it out, wet, sick. He couldn't see. He could only kneel and a moment later say,

"Did it rain today, Lisa?"

"No."

"That's funny. The top of the shed's wet, and it's not blood. The fog's only been in a short while, no time for condensation there. Funny," he said, turning away. He came down into the raw wind and shadows, looking at the canal. Nothing moved anywhere for a moment. Then there was a shadow. Steve saw it running, far off, maybe a hundred yards away.

Steve had his gun out before he'd run four steps, but by that time the shadow was gone, and when Steve reached the canal there was nothing, only the sound of Lisa running on high heels after him. He looked upward at the towers with their platforms and ladders and webs of metal. Good hiding place, those, scuttle up in the shadows and lie watching and waiting over people below. So many towers. Too many. So many platforms and ladders and places to hide. Steve sighed. "Let's go back to Gerbelow's. There's been another accident. An old man tinkered with his machinery and got his head under the wrong dingus."

It was just about then they heard the scream.

. . .

They ran back.

They found a little man thin as steel wire quivering on Gerbelow's shack wall, pouring vomit over a fence in a kind of hot, acrid protest to the species of death that lay up there on the roof. In between awful sucks of breath the little man sobbed,

"God Allmighty, he's dead! If he'd kept his mouth shut, he'd be alive. You see, see him up there, you!" And he made sick again. "I was just—coming by to pay a visit, and—and—"

The little man wiped his mouth with a hairy, fumbling wrist and got Steve and Lisa in a kind of frightened focus. "You. YOU killed him! You—Markham!"

Steve held his badge in his hand like a pebble. The little man eyed it, swore softly, shook like the skin of a horse's flank. "Police. Detectives. Ah. They come a couple nights, get tired waiting, go away. Soons they go—huh—Markham slips out of hiding. He watches. He knows, by damn, by damn. Police always too early or too late. Damn." He bent over, coughing.

Steve quietly asked the man where he lived. The man shook an unsteady hand at the next well. "My name's Black. Oh, God, my stomach, my heart, my eyes. I don't want no trouble, don't make me none!"

"You knew what was happening to Gerbelow?"

Black knew, and kept his voice low about it. "He paid money to Markham so Markham would let him alone. Lots of people paid rather than have their machinery smashed. Machinery's rare, hard to get, hard to repair; the war and all. Oh, God, look at his head up there!" He retched again.

Steve lit a cigarette and gave it to Black to calm him. Black sucked it hungrily, eyes glinting at Lisa, then Steve. He couldn't keep quiet. "Now, look, I—I never seen this—blackmailer."

"No?"

"No. Nobody ever saw him. He telephoned. I wasn't bothered, myself. He didn't ask much money from the others. Just a little. Everybody paid, it was such a small amount of their total profit, and kept their machines whole."

Black went on and on. He told about an oiler named Big Irish Kelly who burned up, screaming, in his shack one night three months before. Markham had set the fire, not intending to murder. But Kelly was caught inside, anyhow, and that was the first blood on Markham's hands. An accident, but good as murder.

Steve interrupted the nervous flow of Black's tongue with: "Time's moving. Look, now, Black, show us around the fields. We're new here."

Black put his small back to the fence and trembled. "Not on your life. Look what it got Gerbelow! This Markham comes night after night. No noise. No sound. Only the fog." He whispered it. "Coming like the fog he would, soft, and going like a wave pulling back into the sea, leaving nothing. People set traps. Did they work? Hell, no? Markham knows everybody's mind. We found ropes on the towers. Figured maybe he swings like an ape around up in the girders in the wind. Surrounded a tower once, but everybody was scared to climb up, scared of being booted off and down. The police came, but they didn't find anything but some sacks shaped like a body, stuffed and propped up in the girders. Markham was gone, like one of them Hindu rope climbers into air."

"Did he ever bring a car with him?"

No car. Lisa suggested a canal boat.

Black was getting calmer now, and snorted smoke. "Hell, no. He never ran away from us, not far anyway before'd vanish. He didn't drive; no car in miles, and no boats. And if he'd swum we'd seen him, sure!"

Steve threw away his cigarette and casually asked,

"By the way, how is your oil well pumping these days, Black?"

That rocked him. Black closed his eyes, waited, opened them again, sullen and dark and replied, "If you want to know—my well's bone dry . . ."

Steve watched Lisa thoughtfully. In the dim light she looked beautiful; she smelled new, freshly young against the old smell of the sea, the primordial odor of oil.

Black's voice was sullen, like his eyes. Steve watched him, now, and said, "Your well's dry. So you're jealous of your neighbors and their riches. You live close by. You know the lay of the land. You could be the blackmailer, and come and go like the fog, eh? couldn't you?"

"Gerbelow and the other people could tell you the blackmailer's voice is young. That don't fit me!"

It didn't. And anyway, Steve figured, it would be pretty dumb to kill someone right next door. And the fact that Charlie'd searched miles down the canal pretty well eliminated Black, anyway.

Steve put away his gun. "You'll have to escort us, whether you like the idea or not, Black. I can't have you running around behind me. There's a lot I want to see and hear. You lead the way."

Black led, grumbling. They walked toward the sea. On the way, Steve considered a few things. Gerbelow and Charlie'd both been killed when they were warm on the trail. Markham seemed like the patient kind of guy who'd wait a few months for it to blow over, and come back later. Meanwhile, though, he'd keep his eye peeled on Lisa and Black and himself. Might even be around right now, listening, hiding. If we get too warm, he'll try and conk us, too. One killing leads to another. You go on, day after day, trying to cover up . . .

• • •

Steve began talking it out to Lisa as they walked down toward the sea, led by Black. "We found Charlie lying in the water near a bunch of abandoned circus wagons at the far end of the canal. So the murderer doesn't live there, Lisa. He wouldn't kill a man in front of his own house."

Lisa looked at all the black shacks and the fog rolling between them. "Here then, Steve?"

Steve exhaled slowly. "Maybe here. It would be someone who's lived here all his life, knows the whole territory and the people. Maybe it was someone I

played with when I was a kid, living down on Windward Avenue. That would be something. Yeah."

They reached the ocean to watch the breakers crash and shake the sand underfoot. A fog horn blew melancholy notes way out toward Catalina Island.

"You think the murderer came this way, Steve?"

"No. Breakers are too damn big, and the Coast Guard is too damn vigilant these days. No." He lit another cigarette. "The more I think about it, Lisa, the more I think the murderer doesn't live here among his victims, or at the end of the canal where we found Charlie. No, a happy medium would be better. Somewhere between here and where we found Charlie. That might be it."

The first iron wrench flew through the dark like a metal bird.

Black grunted and fell down and never got up again.

Lisa screamed and twisted about. Steve knocked her down himself. The second iron wrench smashed off his right side, on the lower rib casing, glancing it. By the impact of it, Steve wondered how much was left of Black's skull if that first wrench hit him square.

Steve fell with it, letting it rock him back. He let go of his muscles and lay watching a shadow run off by itself. Steve's first two shots from his gun ricocheted off iron; the third went into air, the shadow with it, behind wooden girders, Steve up and after it, quick. He left Lisa behind, and in the middle of his running he heard her footsteps ticking after. He cut off down a gravel path to the North, instead of going straight ahead, in case the murderer was waiting with another wrench in the shadows.

He reached the canal, breathing hard. A moment later Lisa grabbed him and sobbed on his lapel. It seemed that Black was dead, too. It seemed that Steve had been the object of that thrown wrench, but Black had gotten in the way. Lisa sobbed about it.

He held onto her, keeping his eyes on everything at once. The oil towers looked like they wanted to fall down on you, leaning way over, dark and high, with fog playing their timbers like a harp.

"Oh, Steve, Steve—"

"Hold onto yourself, sweets. Our little playboy's let himself in for too much playing. He should have been satisfied killing Gerbelow. But he stuck around to see what *we* thought, too. I guess he didn't like the way I talked back there."

They stood there together, like a couple kids, a couple kids in Gigantica. A thousand towers marching through the fog over them, grunting and puffing and steaming. Steve breathed easier, but the pain on his right side was knotting up like a snail in a hot shell.

Lisa said, "This's been an awful night, Steve. We're not any better off than we were. Let's get out of here, let's go home."

He felt tired, himself, sucked out, hot, cold, old, worn. But he swore under his breath and stepped away from her, scowling.

"Charlie's funeral is tomorrow. I can't go look him in the face without doing something about it, now."

There was a long silence. Lisa's voice was funny when she said, "What sort of person was Charlie when he was a kid?"

"Charlie?" He thought about it, uneasy and talking just to hear himself in the dark. "The old days? We ran around at the beach, played on the piers, fooled around the canal. Charlie's mother used to whip him for playing near the canal. I remember, one time—" The *canal* . . .

Steve shut up and walked. Lisa followed without a word, looking aside at his suddenly hard white face. He practically ran down three hundred yards of canal looking for something. When he found it he stopped and stood over it.

A trail of water across cement, dripped and spread and soaking into it.

"There was water on top of Gerbelow's shed, Lisa, by his body. There's water, here, too, where Markham came out of the canal."

"Are you sure, Steve?"

"Yeah. For the first time, I think I am."

"But nobody ever saw anybody swimming in the canal, Steve."

"There are ways and ways of doing things. I got a screwy, half-baked idea. All that crap about climbing towers like an ape-man was so much hash. Markham threw that in to confuse everybody. He didn't want people thinking about the canal too much. He wanted them to suspect one another. But he was an outsider, and this is where he came in."

Steve peeled off his coat in a cold dream. He unlaced his shoes, slowly, quietly, and then said, "You know what Markham looks like? Once you've found a main clue in a setup like this, the other pieces fall in place." He shucked his socks. "Markham's young. Maybe twenty-five, maybe thirty. Not much older. Young and healthy. He's got a chest development that would do for a horse."

"How do you know that?"

"The murderer felt safe in murdering three people. Why? Because he had a good means of escape and didn't live near where any of the bodies were found. But we KNOW where Charlie was looking, *along the canal.* Mathematically then, if the killer doesn't live at either end of the canal where the murders took place, he *must* live in the middle. And his method of travel gives us a general description of his age and health. Markham was always very careful to emerge from the canal a helluva distance beyond the place where he intended causing trouble. That's why nobody ever found his water trail, they didn't look far enough down and away from where the disturbance started on certain nights."

He nodded at the canal.

. . .

"The canal told me. Another thing—he's got a healthy tan. He lives on the canal. Sure." Steve folded all his clothes, including his pants, in a little pile on the cold cement beside the canal waters.

"I don't get it, Steve."

"Markham spends a lot of time on the beach every day. Lives a life of leisure, never does much. Black said he didn't ask for much money from his victims. A little bit from each one. Six or seven people kicking out with thirty bucks a month, or maybe fifty. Our blackmailer has plenty of leisure, plenty of time. That's a pretty good description of him. If I went to a row of houses and asked for a guy answering that description I should be able to find him, eventually, yes? Right. An athlete with a good chest expansion, a healthy tan, idle, young."

Steve was down to the skin and a pair of shorts now. He didn't even see Lisa there in front of him. He just rose and stood by the waters, looking down. "The water's cold tonight. Probably wasn't bad in the summer, but I bet it's cold tonight." He leaned forward. "Nobody ever saw Markham come or go. Like the fog, they said, drifting. Or a wave from the sea. Silent and easy." He looked up at Lisa with the face of a lost child. "Have the police come to the end of the canal in about an hour, Lisa. I'll see you there."

She started to argue.

Steve said, "Nobody ever saw a car come by, or saw a boat on the canal, or saw anybody swimming across the canal. I'll show you how Markham was so mysterious, Lisa. Goodnight, sweets. See you in an hour."

"Steve!"

He was gone. Slipping like something white and of the fog, cleaving the water without a sound, so only a ripple came in to mark his vanishing, he went. Dark waters closed. The whole canal lay cold.

Lisa watched for five minutes, but she never saw Steve come up for air again, no matter how hard she stared.

The fog wrapped her up. The oil wells churned. The ocean pounded the shore. The fog-horn sounded off in another world. Lisa, cold and shivering, gathered up the clothes and went to phone the police.

. . .

Steve was far away from Lisa, going North, when he came to the surface. He felt air break about nostrils, drew it in with a deep move of his lungs, and sank. The first cold shock of water wore off. Pain had gone from his side.

Pulling with great strokes of his arms, back, he skimmed through bottom darkness. Slime touched his fingers when they brushed the bottom. The water itself was clean here. It got sluggish, tepid with oil down further toward the sea. He could see about twenty feet ahead before intense black closed down. The lighting system on the Venice canal is lousy. One feeble lamp throwing diffused

light from a base ten feet back from the canal; one feeble lamp every hundred yards. At night, with light like that, you'd never see anyone swimming five feet under.

When he rose again, with just a soft easy gesture of his body, he heard the oil wells throbbing like black hearts in the cliffs of silence on either side. Going down, he felt the extreme quiet of this mode of travel. No one to see you walking or running along sidewalks or dodging in shadows. Just the cold canal under stars, under fog, under wind. No ruffle on the water from swimming the surface. You kept deep and yanked cold wet power back, kicking away, holding breath, releasing it only in small bubble dribbles, gliding on.

With good lungs, a healthy young body, young and healthier than Steve's, you could swim a long cold way without having air. You rose quiet, gaped, sank, and shot on your dim way like a shark in familiar sounds.

Like a shark. Steve grinned against the passing water's pressure. You get like a fish after months of practice. Less and less air, longer down, easier strokes. No wonder the police never saw anything.

You can follow a guy for miles if he's walking on the sidewalk, and he won't know you're following. You pace him, get ahead of him, idle back, sink, and wait.

Steve came up again, slow and quiet as a fin breaking water.

"Charlie," he thought, "you walked here last night. You knew what you were looking for. Gerbelow told you his suspicions. You went on from there. It's fantastic, but it's true. You figured out how Markham worked, too. You figured him for a deep water shark."

Steve shoved under again, thinking, pushing. The cold wasn't half bad, now. But it'd been a long time since he'd swam late at night this way.

There was a hole gaping in the canal wall. Part of an old storm drain. Steve investigated. It all fell into place in his mind. Swim up the drain, under the ground a few feet to where the water recedes, crouch with your head out of water, bumping the tile walls of the tube, and you could hide all night if you had to, out of sight like a crocodile in a burrow of a river bank. There were storm drains emptying into the canal all along the way. Convenient burrows to rest in when one is tired of swimming. Rest in one for ten minutes, then swim on. Just enough air between top of tube and water for breathing. No wonder Markham fooled everyone!

Steve went on.

. . .

"Remember, Charlie, you and me and the canal when we were kids?" Steve gritted his teeth. "We three, you and me, and the canal. Funny how life begins and ends in the same place, sometimes. Yeah."

"So he followed you, Charlie. Like I'm after him. How far, Charlie? I'll tell you. Figure how far a man can swim underwater, with little rests maybe, until he's

tired. One mile, two miles down the canal. No further. Just far enough away so the cops won't find you. Far enough away from your crimes.

"You figured it, Charlie, walking, smoking your cigars. You didn't know Markham was swimming that night, watching, waiting. Right in front of his house, he dragged you under! Hit you with a pipe, then, so you wouldn't be found there, towed you down to the end of the canal, where everything ends; including the circus and the cages and the old splintered wheels, and he laid you there. Then he swam home, slow, climbed out, went in and dried off, and maybe ate a late supper. Damn!"

Something lay shining in the water at the base of the canal.

Tin cans. A dozen of them, filled with cement, lined up in a neat row. Nothing wrong with tin cans. But they indicated the halfway mark, perhaps. They were put there, maybe, to help a swimmer orient himself without having to lift his head high above water and expose himself to view. Just a row of cans, nobody would notice but a shark.

It must have been fun for awhile, scaring people in the fog, making easy money. Playing like a kid, running around in the salt shadows, vanishing and leaving shivers behind you. Fun making your money that way, lying on the beach by day, getting exercise by night. Fun until the murdering began. You never plan for that. You *never* do.

Tiredness got a start in his arm muscles first. The blow struck by the thrown wrench was really hot, now, a heat almost glowing in the water, cringing with every stroke.

Getting tired. Steve thought quickly. How much further? As far as I can go and be dead tired, and then about one block, two blocks farther, counting in the added strength of an athlete like Markham. That should make it.

The shark came silent, swift and neat.

Shining only faintly, bubbles trailing from it, it shot from dimness, the strength of it becoming hands, legs, a man's face and body!

Steve shouted under water! The anger only shot up in frothed foam!

Markham!

When you take someone into your arms it is to love or to kill. There was no love here. Only the shock of bodies throwing cushions of water, fingers coming up like spiders on Steve's face, trying to poke into his eyes. Instinctively, he balled himself and kicked into that shimmering face, using it as a something to push on at the same time.

Markham came back. This time Steve was ready and used the canal side for traction, striking ahead to meet him. They exploded upward into the fog world, yelling for air, and then down. Muscles and training are not good things to meet. The underwater world was no place for a guy who hadn't been down in it for years.

Markham swarmed over Steve as they sank in a fury of split water. When it came to holding breath Markham had lungs for it, big and long-trained. Just by holding onto Steve and sinking and staying on the bottom, he could win out. Steve would eventually breathe water.

Markham tried that.

Steve relaxed on purpose, just wriggling one arm, one hand. He saved his air, his legs locked against Markham's. Funny. A guy named Markham. Fighting him underwater. Never seen his face before, can't even see it now, thought Steve, and here I am fighting with a name and a lot of muscles and bubbles! They plummeted and struck the canal floor, like they were caught in the falling drapery of a stage's scenery, long yards of green and black velvet tangled around them in the midst of a thunderstorm. Lightning blew Steve's brain apart, he saw fires and comets behind closed eyes. *Air!* In another second his lungs would—

Steve got his right hand on Markham's nose, thrust sharply upward. Markham's mouth broke open, an open trap, air gurgling out sharp, quick, awful. He broke away from Steve as a crab would, scuttling.

Steve knew what happened next. Markham would rise up for air, come down again quick and hold Steve before Steve could get any air at all. Next time there'd be no failure. Only lungs getting cold and dead and soggy.

Steve did it first. He came up, swearing. You can't swear underwater, only in your mind. The swearing is caught in you, just as you are caught in the cold web of water. Steve swore to the night, the insane pulse of oil pumps, the ocean colliding in mighty blows upon some far beach. Then he fell down upon the upcoming Markham, and Markham was wriggling like bait in a can!

Steve held his precious cache of air in raw lungs. His ears were shaking like hunks of tin hung in a high wind, beaten by great timbers of wood.

This is for you, Charlie! He made a slow beat against the slime with Markham's jerking head. *For you, Charlie!* And for Big Irish and the burning shack and old man Gerbelow and the man-shark that swam in calm waters and left no print but a trail of water where he came and went, that evaporated by morning and was gone!

Two beats, three beats.

"Give up your air, you bastard! Give up your air!"

Four beats. Markham laxed. Steve held on in a tight fury. Held until the head got drowsy and all the air regurgitated. With an intake, a rushing, Markham breathed of the good cold canal water where children played in the old days, of the good cold canal water where Charlie and Steve and a little boy who grew up to be a shark played in the warm sun, where all three fell into it and, now, only one would come up alive!

Steve held on until the intake was complete.

A drowsy nightmare. He came up to the outer world, glad for lungs, glad for

the miracle of air. He simply clung limp to the side of the canal for fifteen minutes and sucked in and breathed out, in and out, enjoying it.

Then, treading water very slowly, he went down and found what had to be found, and taking *it* by the hand, swam slowly toward the end of the canal. It seemed a million miles away, so he took it easy, stopping every now and then, and going on again, like two kids going home hand in hand, one leading the other through the cold waters.

The end of the canal. Steve thought of that, thought of Charlie walking, thought of the circus wagons; and then the ironic idea came of itself. With his last strength, he'd do it.

The end of the canal. He reached it. He went under.

When he came up, a moment later, alone, he heard noises. A siren coming in from the suburbs, car motors slowing down, brakes, doors opening. Steve climbed from the water. He heard car doors slam, feet running.

The water ran off him in cold drippings. He shivered with it. His throat was raw, cold agony, and the world suddenly became six flashlights blazing over his wet body.

Lisa was there, crying, suddenly. A siren was just dying. She grabbed hold of him.

"Steve, Steve, you're allright."

"Sure, sure, Lisa sweets. You'll get yourself wet."

"Oh, Steve . . ."

He let her shake against him, so warm, so sweet, and over her shoulder he closed his eyes, felt the water running from his dark hair, running, running. He thought, it's raining in my brain. This'll help wash away part of Charlie's blood. Yeah. Wash away.

His teeth chattering, holding onto Lisa like she was a warm buoy in a sea of fog, he forced the words out of himself:

"Call the wagon. Get the hooks. There's a new kind of animal down in one of those cages. I think I got him tamed. Yeah—"

The lights turned down, burning the cold water through in slashes. Bars. Rusted Bars. And a white animal drifting sluggish behind the bars. Behind the bars. Behind the bars.

Steve laughed crazy and held Lisa close.

"Don't go away."

TWENTY-ONE

BANG! YOU'RE DEAD!

Johnny Choir came like the spring lambs over the green Italian hills, gamboling at the game of war. He leaped a line of bullets as if it were the hedge fronting his Iowa home. He ducked and dodged; a pedestrian in war traffic. Most of all, he laughed and was indefatigable as some khaki kangaroo, forever hopping.

Bullets, mortar shells and shrapnel were only rumors in the air to Johnny. They were not true.

He moved with long-legged strides near San Vittore, froze, pointed his gun, fingered the trigger, cried, "Bang! I gotcha!" and watched a German fall with a red orchid pinned to one lapel. Then Johnny jigged again, to escape the answering machine-gun blast.

An artillery shell approached. Johnny twisted, crying, "Missed!"

It did. It missed, *like always.*

Private Smith followed in Johnny's wake. Only Smith traveled on his thin-muscled stomach, face sweaty and juju'd with Italian mud. Smith crawled, ran, fell, got up again, and never let those enemy bullets near him. Frequently he yelled angrily at Johnny:

"Lie down, you dumb egg! They'll gut you!"

But Johnny danced on to the metal music of bullets like new, bright hummingbirds on the air. While Smith crawled earth-wormwise taking each kilometer, Johnny catapulted toward the enemy, giggling. Tall as the sky, loud as a bazooka gun! Smith broke out a ration of cold sweat just watching the kid.

Germans screamed and ran away from Johnny. When they saw his limbs flourished in a kind of classical St. Vitus—while bullets whistled under his earlobes, between his knees and betwixt thumb and forefinger—German morale disintegrated. They fled wildly!

Laughing heartily, Johnny Choir sat down, pulled out a chocolate ration and teethed on it, while Smith came inching up. Johnny glimpsed the crawling figure's exposed rump, and inquired, "Smith?"

The anonymous rump went down, a familiar thin face came up. "Yeah." Firing had ceased in the area. They were alone and safe. Smith wiped dirt from his

chin. "Honest to God, I get the weemies watching you. You gallop around like a kid in the rain. Only it's the wrong kind of rain."

"I'll duck," said Johnny, munching.

He had a big handsome face with blue child eyes captured in innocent wonder in it, and small pink child lips. His shorn hair resembled the blonde stubble of a clothes brush. Now immersed deeply in the enjoyment of candy, he had forgotten war.

"I duck," he explained again.

A thousand times Smith'd heard that excuse. It was *too* simple an explanation. God had a hand in this somewhere, Smith was certain. Johnny had probably been dunked in holy water. Bullets detoured around him, not daring to touch. Yeah. That was it. Smith laughed musingly.

"What happens if you forget to duck, Johnny?"

Johnny replied, "I play dead."

"YOU—" said Smith, blinking, staring, "—you play dead. Uh-huh." He exhaled slowly. "Yeah. Sure. Okay."

Johnny threw away the candy wrapper. "I been thinking. It's almost my turn to play dead, isn't it? Everybody's done it, except me. It's only fair I take my turn. Everybody's been so decent about it, I think *I'll* play dead today."

Smith found that his hands were shaking. His appetite was gone, too. "Now what do you want to talk that way for?" he argued.

"I'm tired," said Johnny simply.

"Take a nap, then. You're the damnedest one for snoozing. Take a nap."

Johnny considered that with a pout. Then he arranged himself on the grass in the shape of a fried shrimp. "All right, Private Smith. If you say so."

Smith consulted his watch. "You got twenty minutes. Snooze fast. We'll be moving up as soon as the captain shows. And we don't want him finding you asleep."

. . .

But Johnny was already deep in soft dreams. Smith looked at him with wonder and envy. God, what a guy. Sleeping in the middle of hell. Smith had to stay, watching over him. It wouldn't do to have some stray German sniping Johnny while he couldn't duck. Strangest damn thing he ever knew. . . .

A soldier ran heavily up, panting. "Hi, Smith!"

Smith recognized the soldier, uneasily. "Oh, it's you, Melter . . ."

"Somebody wounded?" Melter was big, too, but off-center with his fat and too high and hoarse with his voice. "Oh, it's Johnny Choir. Dead?"

"Taking a nap."

Melter gaped. "A nap? For cripes sake, that infant! That moron!"

Smith said, quietly, "Moron, hell. He just brushed the Heinies off this rise with

one hand. I saw them throw a thousand rounds at Johnny, a thousand rounds, mind you, and Johnny slipped through it like a knife through warm ribs."

Melter's pink face looked worried. "What makes him tick, anyway?"

Smith shrugged. "As far as I can figure, he thinks this is all a game. He never grew up. He's got a big body with a kid's mind in it. He doesn't take war serious. He thinks we're all playing at this."

Melter swore. "Don't I wish we were." He eyed Johnny jealously. "I've watched him before, running like a fool, and he's still alive. Him and that shimmy of his, and yelling, "Missed me!" like a kid, and yelling "Gotcha!" when he shot a Heinie. How do you explain that?"

Johnny turned in his sleep, and his lips fumbled with words. A couple came out, soft, easy. "Mom! Hey, Mom! You there? Mom? You there, Mom?"

Smith reached over to take Johnny's hand. Johnny squeezed it in his sleep, saying, with a little smile, "Oh, Mom."

"So now," said Smith, "after all this, I'm a mother."

They stayed there, the three of them, for all of three minutes, silent. Melter finally cleared his throat, nervously. "Some—somebody ought to tell Johnny about the facts of life. Death is real, and war is real, and bullets can knock out your guts. Let's tell him when he wakes up."

Smith laid Johnny's hand aside. He pointed at Melter, and his face got paler and harder with each word. "Look now, don't come around here with your philosophy! What's bad for you ain't bad for him! Let him dream his dreams, if he wants. I been with him since boot-camp, watching over him like a brother. I know. There's only one thing that keeps him in one piece, and that's thinking the things he thinks, believing that war is fun and we're all kids! And if you so much as flip your lip, I'll drop you in the Gagliano River with anchors on."

"Okay, okay, don't get tough. I only thought—"

Smith stood up. "You thought. You thought! Why, damn you, I can see the stinking look on your face! You'd like to see Johnny dead. You're yellow jealous, that's what! Well, now look—" He made a sweep of his arm, furiously. "—you keep away! From now on, you romp on the other side of any hill we're on! I don't want you running off at the mouth! Now, get the hell out of here!"

Melter's fat face was red as Italian *vino.* He held his gun hard. His fingers itched the butt end of it. "It ain't fair," he replied tightly, hoarsely. "It ain't fair to us that he gets by. It ain't fair he lives while we die. What you expect, me to love him? Ha! When I gotta die, he lives, so I should kiss him? I don't work that way!"

Melter strode off, his back stiff and working funny, his neck like a ramrod, his fingers tight fists, his strides short and jolting.

Smith watched him. There I go with my big mouth, he thought. I should have stroked him nice. Now, maybe he tells the captain, and the captain turns Johnny over to the psychiatric ward for observation. Then maybe they trundle him back

to the States and I lose my best friend. God, Smith, you lummox! Why ain't you got lockjaw?

Johnny was waking up, rubbing eyes with big farmer-boy knuckles, tongue exploring the outer reaches of his chin for stray particles of ration chocolate.

They went over another hill together, Johnny Choir and Private Smith. Johnny dancing in his special way, always ahead. Smith wisely but not happily bringing up the rear; afraid where Johnny was never afraid, careful where Johnny always splurged, groaning while Johnny was laughing into enemy fire. . . .

. . .

"Johnny!"

It was inevitable. As Smith felt the machine-gun bullet enter his right side, just above the hip, felt pain hammer, pound, wallop through him under tremendous striking impact, felt blood running in pulses through suddenly slippery, numb fingers, smelled his own blood like some nightmare chemical, he knew it was inevitable.

He yelled again.

"Johnny!"

Johnny stopped. He came running back, grinning. He put away his grin when he saw Smith lying there giving a blood transfusion to the body of the Earth.

"Hey, Private Smith, what's this about?" he asked.

"I'm—I'm playing wounded," said Smith on one elbow, not looking up, sucking in air, blowing it out. "You—go on ahead, Johnny, and don't mind me."

Johnny looked like a kid told to stand in the corner.

"Hey. That's not fair. You should've told me, and I could play wounded, too. I'll get too far ahead and you won't be able to catch up."

Smith forced a sick smile, weak and pale, and the blood pumped. "You were always too far ahead of me anyway, Johnny. Even if I ran in circles around you, I could never catch up."

That was too subtle for Johnny, who gave forth with a confused scowl. "I thought you were my pal, Smith?"

"Sure. Sure I am, Johnny. I am." Smith coughed. "Sure. But, you see, I just sudden-like found out I was tired. It came on me quick, you see. No time to tell you. So I'm playing wounded."

Johnny brightened, crouching down. "I'll play wounded, too."

"Like hell you will!" Smith tried to rise, but pain clenched him in a hot, tight fist, and he couldn't speak for half a minute. Then: "Look now—you keep your nose out of this. You get the hell on to Rome!"

Johnny said, "You don't want me to play—wounded?"

"No, dammit!" cried Smith, and things got darker, darker.

Johnny said nothing, just stood there, tall and quiet and not understanding,

and lost. Here was the man who had been his best friend since the first day in the Army, since leaving New York harbor; his best friend all up through Africa, the Sicilian hills and Italy, now lying here and telling him to go on—alone.

In the webbed dark of his mind, Smith felt it, too. Keen and sharp like a new kind of razor slicing him down the middle. Wounded, and Johnny going on alone.

Who would tell Johnny to keep away from bodies, it was against the rules? Who would assure him, as Smith'd done, to keep intact that incredible phantasy of Johnny's beliefs; who would assure him that those wounds were fake, that this blood was only something like catsup carried by soldiers when they wanted time out? Who would censor Johnny's outbursts like that time in Tunis when Johnny asked his commanding officer?

"When do I get my bottle of catsup, sir?"

"Catsup. Catsup?"

"Yes, sir, for when I want to be wounded, sir?"

Who would storm in and explain to the commanding officer, "You see, sir, Johnny means, does he carry his blood plasma with him from the Red Cross, sir? In case he needs a transfusion, sir."

"Uh. Oh, is *that* what he means? No. The medical unit carries that. They'll give it to you when the necessity arises."

Who will extricate Johnny from situations like that? Or the time Johnny asked of a senior officer, "If I play dead, sir, how long do I stay dead before I'm allowed to get up, sir?"

Who will tell the officer that Johnny is only joking, sir, only joking, ha ha, and not an infant in overgrown skin. Who? thought Smith.

. . .

Someone hurried up in the dimness of pain and the sounds of conflict. By the sound of the big clumsy feet, Smith knew it was Melter.

Melter's voice came from the gathering dark.

"Oh, it's you, Johnny. Who's that at your feet? Well—" Melter laughed. Johnny laughed, too, to be compatible. Oh, Johnny, how can you laugh? If you only knew, son. "Well, well, if it ain't Smith. Dead?"

Johnny said, eagerly. "No, only playing wounded."

"Playing?" said Melter. Smith couldn't see the man, but he heard the subtle sound of Melter's tongue touching that word. "Playing, eh? Playing wounded. So. Hmm."

Smith got his eyes open, but he couldn't speak, he could only blink, watching Melter.

Melter spat on the ground. "Can you talk, Smith? No? Good." Melter looked in four directions, nodding, satisfied. He took Johnny by the shoulder. "Come here, Johnny, I'd like to ask a few questions."

"Sure, Private Melter."

Melter patted Johnny's arm, and his eyes shone hot and funny. "I hear you're the lad who knows how to duck bullets?"

"Sure. Best ducker in the army. Smith's pretty good, too. A little slower, maybe, but I'm teaching him."

Melter said, "Think you can teach me, Johnny?"

Johnny said, "You already learned, haven't you?"

"Have I?" Melter wondered. "Well, yeah, I guess I have—a little. Sure. But not like you, Johnny. You got the technique down good. What—what's the secret?"

Johnny considered a moment, and Smith tried to say something, tried to shout or scream or even wriggle, and he didn't have the strength. He heard Johnny say, far away.

"I don't know. You know how it is when you're a kid and play cops and robbers. The other guy is selfish. He never wants to lie down, when you say 'Bang, I gotcha!' The whole secret is in saying, 'Bang, I gotcha!' first. Then they've *got* to lie down."

"Oh." Melter looked at him as if he were crazy. "Say that again, will you?" Johnny said it again, and Smith had to laugh inside his hell of pain. Melter thought he was being kidded. Johnny said it again.

"Don't hand me that!" snarled Melter, impatiently. "There's a good deal more to it than that! You go running and jumping around like a bull-moose and nobody even touches you!"

"I duck," said Johnny.

Smith laughed some more. Old jokes are the best jokes.

Then Smith's stomach caught and held pain.

Melter's face was all deep-cut lines and suspicion and hate.

"Okay, smart guy, if you're so good—suppose you walk off a hundred feet and let me take pot shots at you?"

Johnny smiled. "Sure. Why not?"

He walked off and left Melter standing there. He walked off a hundred paces and stood there tall and blond and so damn young and clean as butter. Smith wiggled his fingers, screaming inside. "Johnny, don't do it, Johnny! For Crissake, God, knock Melter down with the butt-end of a lightning bolt!"

. . .

They were in a kind of depression between hills, a small place where you could do things and not be seen too well by anyone. Melter stood against the trunk of an olive tree so as to shield his action, just in case, and casually lifted his gun.

Melter loved his gun with his fingers, carefully adjusting it to his eyes, finding Johnny in the sights, caressing the trigger, pulling back slowly.

Where in hell IS everybody! wondered Smith. AH!

Melter fired.

Johnny ducked.

"Missed me!" came Johnny's good-humored shout.

Johnny stood, intact. Melter swore. Melter aimed again, even slower this time. He found Johnny's heart with the sight and Smith screamed some more, but none of it got out of his mouth. Melter licked his lips and—fired!

"Missed again!" observed Johnny.

Melter fired four times more, quicker, faster, angered and potent and furious, color gorging his neck, rage in his eyes, hands fumbling—and with each report that knocked the warm afternoon air, Johnny skipped rope or ducked doors or sidestepped elbows or kicked a football or did a ballet dance, and Melter's gun fumed empty.

Melter rammed more bullets in it, his face now blanched white, his knees sagging.

Johnny came running up.

Melter whispered, fearfully. "How in God's name do you do it?"

"Like I told you."

A long pause. "Do you think I could learn."

"Anybody can learn, if they want."

"Teach me. Teach me, Johnny. I don't want to die, I don't want to die. I hate this whole damn war. Teach me, Johnny. Teach me, and I'll be your friend."

Johnny shrugged. "Do just like I told you, that's all."

Melter said, slowly. "Now, you are joking again."

"No, I'm not."

"Yes, I think you are joking again," said Melter in a pale, thick anger. He shifted his gun to the ground, considering new tactics and decided about it. "Well, listen here, smart boy, for your information, I will tell you something." He jerked one hand. "Those men you passed in the field, they weren't playing, no, they were really, actually, finally dead! Dead, yes, dead, you hear! Dead! Not playing, not kidding, not joking, but dead, dead, cold dead!" He beat it at Johnny like fists. He beat the air with it and turned the day into winter cold. "Dead!"

Smith winced inside. Johnny, don't listen to him! Don't let him hurt you, Johnny! Go on believing the world is a good place. Go on living intact and unafraid! Don't let fear in, Johnny. You'll crumble with it!

Johnny said to Melter, "What're you talking about?"

"Death!" bellowed Melter wildly. "That's what I'm talking about! Death. You can die, and Smith can die, and I can die from bullets. Gangrene, rot, death! You've been fooling yourself. Grow up, you fool, before it's too late! Grow up!"

Johnny stood there a long time, and then he began to sway, his fists in big farmer-knotted pendulums. "No. You're lying," he said, stubbornly.

"Bullets can kill, this is war!"

"You're lying to me," said Johnny.

"You can die, so can Smith. Smith's dying now. Smell his blood! What do you think that stench is from the fox-holes, wild grapes for the winepresses of war? Yes, death and bones!"

Johnny looked around with unsteady eyes. "No, I won't believe it." He bit his lips and closed his eyes. "I won't. You're mean, you're bad, you're—"

"You can die, Johnny, die!"

Johnny began to cry, then. Like a babe in some barren wilderness, and Smith wrenched his shoulder trying to get up. Johnny cried and it was a new and small sound in the wide world.

Melter pushed Johnny staggeringly toward the front lines. "Go on. Get out there and die, Johnny. Get out there and get your heart pinned on a stone wall like a dripping medal!"

Don't go, Johnny, Smith's shouting got lost in the red, pain cavern of his interior, lost and useless and mute. Don't go, kid. Stay here, don't listen to this guy! Stick around, Johnny-lad!

Johnny stumbled away, sobbing, toward the blunt staccato of machine guns, toward the whine of artillery shells. His gun was held in one long limp arm, its butt dragging pebbles in a dry rattling stone laughter.

Melter looked after him in a hysterical kind of triumph.

Then Melter hefted his weapon and walked East over another hill, out of view.

Smith lay there, his thoughts getting sicker and dimmer, and Johnny walked on and on. If only there were some way to cry out. *Johnny, look out!*

An artillery shell came over and burst. Johnny fell down on the ground without a sound and lay there, not making a movement of his once-miraculous limbs.

Johnny!

Have you stopped believing? Johnny, get up! Are you dead now? Johnny?

And then darkness mercifully gathered Smith in and swallowed him down.

. . .

Scalpels rose and fell like small keen guillotines, cutting away death and decay, beheading misery, eliminating metal pain. The bullet, plucked from Smith's wound, was cast away, small, dark, clattering into a metal pan. The doctors pantomimed over and around him in a series of blurred frenzies. Smith breathed easily.

Across the dim interior of the tent Johnny's body lay on another operating table, doctors curious over him in a sterile tableau.

"Johnny?" and this time Smith had a voice.

"Easy does it," a doctor cautioned. The lips under the white mask moved. "That a friend of yours—over there?"

"Yeah. How is he?"

"Not so good. Head injury. Fifty-fifty chance."

They concluded with Smith, stitches, swabbings, bandages and all. Smith watched the wound vanish under white gauze, then he looked at the assembled crowd of medics. "Let me help with him, will you?"

"Well, now, after all, soldier—"

"I know the guy. I know him. He's funny. If it means keeping him alive, how's about it?"

The scowl formed over the surgical mask, and Smith's heart beat slow, slow. The doctor blinked. "I can't chance it. What can you possibly do to help me?"

"Wheel me over. I tell you I can help. I'm his bosom-pal. I can't let him conk out now. Hell, no!"

The doctors conferred.

They transferred Smith to a portable stretcher and two orderlies delivered him across the tent where the surgeons were engaged with Johnny's shaved, naked skull. Johnny looked asleep and dreaming a nightmare. His face twisted, worried, frightening, wondering, disappointed and dismayed. One of the surgeons sighed.

Smith touched one surgical elbow. "Don't give up, Doc. Oh, God, don't give up." To Johnny: "Johnny-lad. Listen. Listen to me. Forget everything Melter said. Forget everything he said—you hear me? He was full of crap up to here!"

Johnny's face still was irritated, changing like disturbed water. Smith gathered his breath and continued.

"Johnny, you gotta go on playing, like always. Go on ducking, like in the old days. You always knew how, Johnny. It was part of you. It didn't take learning or teaching, it was natural. And you let Melter put ideas in your head. Ideas that may be okay for people like Melter and me and others, but don't jibe for you."

One surgeon made an impatient gesture with a rubber-gloved hand.

Smith asked him, "Is his head hurt bad, Doc?"

"Pressure on the skull, on the brain. May cause temporary loss of memory."

"Will he remember being wounded?"

"It's hard to say. Probably not."

Smith had to be held down. "Good! Good! Look," he whispered quickly, confidentially to Johnny's head. "Johnny, just think about being a kid, and how it was then, and don't think about what happened today. Think about running in ravines and through creeks and skipping pebbles on water, and ducking b-b guns, and laughing, Johnny!"

Inside, Johnny thought about it.

. . .

A mosquito hummed somewhere, hummed and circled for an endless time. Somewhere guns rumbled.

Someone finally told Smith, "Respiration improved."

Someone else said, "Heart action picking up."

Smith kept talking, part of him that wasn't pain, that was only hope and anxiety in his larynx, and fear-fever in his brain. The war thunder came closer, closer, but it was only the blood hurled through his head by his heart. Half an hour passed by. Johnny listened like a kid in school to an over-patient teacher. Listened and smoothed out the pain, erased the dismay in his expression, and regained the old certainty and youth and sureness and calm acceptance of belief.

The surgeon stripped off his tight rubber gloves.

"He'll pull through."

Smith felt like singing. "Thanks, doc. Thanks."

The doc said, "You from Unit 45, you and Choir and a guy named Melter?"

"Yeah. What about Melter?"

"Funniest darn thing. Ran head on into a burst of German machine-gun fire. Ran down a hill screaming something about being a kid again." The doc scratched his jaw. "We picked up his body with fifty bullets in it."

Smith swallowed, lying back to sweat. Ice-cold, shivering sweat.

"That's Melter for you. He just didn't know how. He grew up, too fast, like all of us. He didn't know how to stay young, like Johnny. That's why it didn't work. I—I gotta give him credit for trying, though, the nut. But there's only one Johnny Choir."

"You," diagnosed the surgeon, "are delirious. Better take a sedative."

Smith shook his head. "What about home? Are we going, Johnny and I, with our wounds?"

The surgeon formed a smile under the mask. "Home to America, the two of you."

"Now, you're delirious!" Smith let out a careful whoop of glee. He twisted to get a good look at Johnny sleeping so peacefully and easily and dreaming, and he said, "You hear that, Johnny? We're going home! You and me! Home!"

And Johnny replied, softly, "Mom? Oh, Mom."

Smith held Johnny's hand. "Okay," he said to the surgeons. "So now I'm a mother. Pass the cigars!"

TWENTY-TWO

ENTER—THE DOUSER (HALF-PINT HOMICIDE)

It would be wrong to say that the Douser got the idea just as he was being pushed off Union Bridge by a man. Truth to tell, Douser tempted the man with, "Come on, push me," and then stepped aside, politely, allowing the man precedence.

The man screamed.

So did a train that passed below a moment later.

A few minutes later Douser was talking over a phone to a very bad fat man. The man's name was Schabold. Douser talked jovially with him. Nobody called anybody any names.

"Yeah, Schabold. My name's Douser Mulligan. And this corpse, under the Union Bridge, I mentioned, was one of your bodyguards—"

The news was not good to Schabold. Douser consoled him:

"Know just how you feel, Mr. Schabold. That's three of your boys hurt in one month. One shot himself accidentally, and is still in the hospital. Another was picked up drunk on Main Street, dripping counterfeit money. That's sad."

Schabold spoke a few sad words, like a fat boy who just lost a bag of candy: "You're the little sparrow who hangs around the Central Jail, are you not?"

"That's right. Well, see you around, huh, Schabold."

Douser hung the receiver back on its prong to sleep.

He walked up toward the jail in a cold winter wind. Things were becoming fun, now. The next hour he'd dawdle speaking with Sarge Palmborg at the jail, keeping an eye peeled, patiently, for a large ebony limousine containing one fat man, well worried. Life was dull except on nights like this, when he had many people, assorted sizes, hating his miniature guts. Yes, sir!

Sergeant Palmborg was standing in front of jail an hour later.

"Evening, Sergeant Palmborg!"

"So here you are again!" Palmborg looked down a million miles. "So." He lit his pipe in god-like movements. "Don't nothing discourage you?"

"Nothing," said the Douser.

A moment's silence. "They took away your badge a year ago for being so damn flippant."

"It was a frame. Look." Douser formed a frame with his hands. "With gilt edges, too. Feel."

"And," Palmborg proceeded with his gray calm, "they robbed your holster like a bird's nest. And here you are, again, looking like a small puss who's digested the canary."

"A fine meal," said Douser.

The sarge nodded back one shoulder. "A body's cooling in there, just brought in from the railyards. One of Schabold's men. Naturally, you know nothing about him."

"Naturally."

"He was one of them gunmen connected with that Detroit bank killing. They never could get a thing on him."

"Except a locomotive."

The sergeant snorted. "You're in deep, lad. I don't know if you've pestered Schabold or not. Whoever did it, is in for it deep. Schabold won't take it. Three of his men hurt since he arrived in town a month ago—"

Douser was about to comment, when thunder boomed the winter night, and a big ebony limousine roared out of nowhere. Schabold sprawled on its velvety rear cushion, fat cold pork, staring out. "Well—" Douser clocked him. "Right on time—" Douser waved.

"Douser," pleaded the sarge. "Take your fingers away from your nose." The car roared out of sight. The sarge bit his pipe. "I'd like to get something on that blackmarketing bum, that soft ton of bacon—"

Douser babbled. "I got a theory. Schabold's rich, always has been. Why, then, did he go crooked? I ask you. Remember the old bromide; each of us carries the seed of our own doom? That's Schabold. Figure out his seed and you got him. Listen, here, sarge—"

They conversed in a rising wind. Waiting. Douser's heart thumped like a toy tambourine. Waiting. And when the ebony limousine came roaring by again, the sarge, on cue, whistled, and walked out to intercept it, Douser at his heels.

• • •

The limousine rammed on its brakes, heaving Schabold into one window: "What's the meaning of this?"

The sarge smiled. "Got your draft cards?"

Schabold produced his with a glitter of hard rings on soft fingers. The sarge okayed them, and nodded at the bodyguards up front. "You, too."

"Uh—" said the bodyguards, "we—that is—we come out in such a rush we—forgot to bring them."

"Well, well," said the sarge. "We'll have to hold you until the FBI checks your draft status tomorrow morning. Climb out."

"Tomorrow!" Schabold emerged in large soft portions from his throne. He searched the sarge's face, found nothing, and shifted his wrath to his men. "You—careless louts!"

"You can go now," said Palmborg to the fat man. "We don't want you. You're okay."

Schabold flapped big red lips, changed his mind, got in the car behind the wheel, silent. Watching him, Douser got an idea of a large grey helpless barrage balloon maneuvered in life's winds by obedient servants forever running in its shadow. Now the balloon's tie-lines were clipped. Let the blimp scream for orders, let the wind blow. Douser was here now, to answer.

Douser jumped beside Schabold in the front seat, slammed the door, waved bye-bye at the sarge.

"Hey!" rumbled the blimp.

"Night, sarge. You know who I'm with if I'm dead tomorrow. Remember." Douser turned to the fat man. "Let's go!"

It was hard to tell who was most amazed. Mouths were open. Somebody swore. The motor boomed and the car heaved off into the winter streets, roaring.

Douser settled cozily, worming his small bottom about, chuckling. "Slow down. We got all night to talk. About ways of you killing me and me killing you."

The car slowed. "All right, what's the deal?"

"No deal. This is a safe place to spend the night, with you. In the lion's mouth, I guess you'd say. Everybody saw you spirit me off into the night, fat man. That's just another part of my master plan. You don't dare touch me, tonight, or even tomorrow."

The road rushed under the car in a quick rubber whisper.

"Tell you how it is with me, Schabold. Sometimes I don't sleep nights worrying about the criminals walking free in this world. I get mad. Then I do things about it. I make sure a guy's a real honest-to-god criminal, then I start clicking. I eliminated your boy friends first, because if something happened to me, you might try and frame it off on one of them. That's your usual trick. But I wanted you—*alone.* Just you, me and the next twenty-four hours, darling. It's your move."

Schabold strangled inside his lapels. His eyes were grey, blind, shining straight ahead: his jowls shaking.

Glancing at the swiftly running scenery, Douser said, "There's your house, Schabold. You want to stop and pick up a gun—"

Brakes screamed. Douser bounced like a ping-pong on the windshield. Schabold looked pleased, and bulged from the car to pump across the street, Douser pattering after.

They found a gun in the kitchen. Douser cheerily helped look for it. "Is it in the wastebasket? No. Refrigerator? I know you wouldn't carry a gun by the jail. How about this jar of berry jam?"

Schabold found the gun. Munching crackers, Douser followed him back to the car. Nobody made any phone calls to warn anybody to come help somebody. The car roared again.

Schabold, with gun, settled down, over the shock of things. The bright eyes began to think inside the fat. He poked up the speed. They boomed through Beverly Hills, Douser whistling happily. When he finished whistling he asked the fat man a favor:

"Please, Mr. Schabold. Take out your gun."

"What for?"

"For the hell of it."

Schabold pulled the gun. "Well . . .?"

Douser gave directions. "Stick it against my chest."

The gun muzzled with ugly pleasure against ribs the size of a small birdcage.

Douser panted on his fingernails, rubbed them boredly on his knee-cap with a slow, languid motion. "Now—pull the trigger."

. . .

The car purred down into a husky mutter. Schabold whispered: "Oh, I'd love to pull this trigger. And keep on pulling it, over and over." The eyes in the fat opened, closed, opened again. "Lord, what it would do to your pint-sized machinery. It'd be worth it—almost."

"Almost?" wondered the Douser. "I gather there is some doubt?"

The gun chewed his ribs, more.

"Enjoy yourself. Play with me. You think you got me in a spot where you can laugh. Play with me. Go on."

The car crawled slow, and the wind blew hard and cold through the window. Schabold kept whispering slow and cold, too:

"But I don't want a jail-rap, I don't like trouble. Not now, anyway."

He put the gun away, with a great battle of will.

Douser's heart played hopscotch, marking lines on his stomach and jumping up and down on it, hard. He sweated.

Schabold sat thinking a long while as they drove toward the sea. Salt wind blew in from the stars, and Schabold chewed over an idea like a wad of gum, and finally smiled, the wrong kind of smile, at Douser. Douser swallowed, tightly.

The ocean rushed to meet them with a boom of surf and a stretch of snow white sand. Schabold stopped the car and looked at the waves, his mind going out and in with them, deciding. When next he spoke, his voice was thoughtful, soft. The anger was gone, the excitement and fury. In it was the sound of a man whose decision is made.

"Douser, it's either you or me. . . . "

Douser's heart leaped in its cage like a frantic red bird.

Schabold confessed a bit. "I came to the Coast to blackmarket gas. I'm a business man, you might say. You get in my way, hurt my men, bother me at all hours. Tonight, I decided to supervise your demise myself. I never do a job alone, I need help. And my men are convenient hooks upon which to hang prison terms in case anything happens. That Detroit job, for example, they never proved a thing on us. I let Louie Martin take the rap for that cop killing in Fort Worth. There's always a way, Douser," he said indulgently, gently. "I have never been in jail in my life. I pride myself on my clever record. Never been in jail. You, now, tonight, thought to get me alone, to joke with me, work on me. Well, now, little man," he finished dryly, "get out of the car, very slowly, please."

The gun was in Douser's side again. Douser gentled the door open, slid out. Schabold slid heavily after, eyes shining like a saint.

"Goodbye, Douser."

"Don't be a fool!" Douser cried.

Schabold fired his gun.

He kept firing it until it was empty.

BANG. Douser jerked. BANG. He shriveled with it. BANG. It kicked his eardrums. Bullets sang hot songs. BANG. Ricocheting off sea-pebbles. Stars shook like fireflies. BANG!

Silence.

The sea came in and went out, lifting its salty skirts.

And out of salt silence, Schabold's soft, genuine laughter.

. . .

Douser's fingers crawled like wary spiders, chest, stomach, legs, arms, then flying to his face.

Schabold kept laughing. "You should—have—seen—your—feet!"

Douser said simply, "I'm alive."

"Certainly." Schabold laughed again.

Douser looked almost disappointed. "You missed me on purpose!"

Laughter tears ran down the fat man's face. He was having fun, playing Douser's game right back at him. Now he climbed back in the car, flicked the keys in the ignition, chortling. "Well, I don't have to kill you, Douser," he said. "For the last hour I've worked on some way to kill you while I had the chance. It was tempting. My emotions got hold of me. Well, I'll wait. A week or a month. Until my boys are sprung from jail. Wait until my alibi is water-tight, then you'll vanish and they'll never see you again. Why, you haven't got a thing on me." He was confident. "Not a thing. All I have to do is drive off, leave you here, go home to bed, forget the whole matter."

"There's only one thing wrong with your logic," said the Douser, reaching into the car and extracting the keys from the ignition with a deft move of fingers.

"I haven't changed *my* mind. You can put off killing me, *you* think. But who changes *my* mind? You been big and fat and loud and rich for years. I'd do anything to pin something on you. Even if it meant killing myself."

Schabold looked at him as if he was a man from another star. "You're crazy. Crazy as a betel-nut!"

"Maybe." Douser jangled the keys. "If you drive off, leaving me here, I'll climb the palisades and jump off the cliff. Maybe I'll get killed, maybe not. Either way, it involves you for a prison term."

Schabold couldn't understand that. "I'm talking to a moron. You keep talking that way, I'll have to shut you up."

"Ah-ha!" cried Douser triumphantly. "See? You're trapped! No matter what you do, you're trapped. Kill me and you're caught with no one to pin the crime on but yourself! Don't kill me, and I'll kill you, or jump off a cliff—who knows?"

"You—you got a gun?"

That was funny. "No. Only my fists and my feet and a reputation for being a nuisance. I know you, Schabold. I've studied you a long time. Otherwise I wouldn't have risked coming with you. Some other Joe might've shot me. Not you. You're careful. Well, the fun's over. You ever been slapped in the face, Schabold?"

"No. . . . "

"Well, *there,* then!"

Douser slapped him.

"Hey!" Schabold crouched behind the wheel.

"I bet you never been kicked in the shins," said Douser. "I bet nothing ever happened to you, except one thing, the thing that made you turn crook. What happened, Schabold?"

Schabold blinked.

"You heard me." Douser leaned forward. "What happened."

Schabold waited and said, "1929."

Douser nodded. "Thought so. Bathed, manicured all your life. Life didn't touch you. 1929 slammed you, though. You couldn't take meeting reality. You turned crook and went on being rich the wrong way. That's what I figured. Well, fat man, shake hands. I'm life, I'm reality catching up with you again. I'm the stuff you been running away from for years. Life. Pain. Reality. That's me. Shake?"

Douser was on the running board, one foot inside the car, kicking softly into Schabold's shins. Gently, at first. "I figure it this way—cops get killed everyday. What if I get killed? It's no worse. I have fun. I get my man. There!"

"Stop it, stop it, stop!" cried Schabold.

"I dare you to kill me! Come on, fat man!"

Schabold fell heavily out the opposite side of the car. Douser scrambled after.

Schabold panted out and in. "You—you can't—bother—m—me! Keep away, keep away!" he cried.

"Ever been strangled, Schabold? Let's try it!"

With a bear-like roar and a sweep of one arm, Schabold shook the clinging Douser loose like a cockroach. He threw his empty gun and missed. Douser kicked shins again.

"Getting your temper up, huh? Good." Douser danced around. "You're getting mad, Schabold. That's fatal. You're getting mad and you're going to die! You're an oyster with its shell off, soft and white underneath!"

Schabold lumbered forward. Douser darted around the car. "Tag, you're it!"

The fat man clutched a heavy rock and heaved it like a girl playing basketball, with both hands. It clunked off the fender. Douser ducked and ran. Bellowing in a perfect fury, sounding the big expanses of his lungs, Schabold careened in heavy pursuit. He was off the edge, all the way. Instinctive self-preservation was overcome, swallowed by unthinking, bestial rage. He snarled.

"Douser, Douser, you little louse!"

They made a queer dreamy chase across deep sands with the sea-beat timing them, and only the stars watching. Ahead, half a mile off, was a necklace of lights lying by the sea—Venice Amusement Pier—calling them on.

. . .

It was two in the morning when they reached Venice Pier, their tongues showing out of their mouths. The dark pier was deserted.

Slowing to a wary, quick-breathing walk, Schabold said,

"Oh, how I hate you, you louse."

Under the plankings the sea walked on salt feet between the piles. Schabold's feet were heavy, thick, tired, old, sludging.

Like a humming-bird, one moment Douser poised under Schabold's engulfing arms, the next instant he was gone.

Douser made movements.

Somewhere a merry-go-round burst into brilliant, blatant light. The blind eyes of Schabold focussed dully, bringing out of salt shadows horses frozen on brass poles. A calliope wheezed. Douser tossed a switch gaily. Horses shocked into leaping life, going around. Douser went around with them on a reeling world.

"Come and get me, fat man!"

Schabold obeyed, but the turntable threw him aside emotionlessly. He fell, and a moment later there were footsteps running, a night watchman flushing his huge belly and sweating face with a flashlight.

"Hey, in there!"

Schabold got up and hit the man a terrific blow. He wanted no outside distractions now. The night watchman tumbled, got up, and went off, yelling for help.

"You just killed a man, Schabold!" taunted Douser, coming around, going away, coming around, going away. The calliope yelled with him.

Schabold began to cry, frustratedly. He held out angry fingers as if they, and wishing hard enough, would cease the revolving world where all values shifted and all horses laughed.

The merry-go-round stopped. With a chunky bleat, jowls shaking, Schabold clambered aboard, only to have the world jerk into life again. Screaming, he held to the swaying universe and could not find Douser, only a shadow running off down, away through a corridor of awful music, like a little bird vanishing forever. . . .

. . .

They found Schabold at dawn, seated on the largest horse of the merry-go-round at Venice, going up and down and around, the music blaring, him going up and down in a heavy, mechanical, lethargic rhythm. Schabold liked the horses. He didn't want to get off.

He kicked the officer who tried to get him down off his mount. He also kicked another officer in the stomach, and bit a third.

So they put him in jail.

Sitting on the sergeant's desk a few days later, Douser heard the story from the sarge's own gentle lips,

"Schabold went stir nuts. He was jailed for disturbing the peace, that's all. But he kicked an officer. Then he added to his crimes. He rattled bars, took swipes at people, tore off his clothes, threw away his diamond rings, screamed, and finally broke a little guy's arm, claiming the little guy's name was Douser. Yeah, Douser, mind you. Schabold finally confessed *everything.* Blackmarket deals, killings, robberies. It was like a load on his stomach he wanted to heave up, so he could feel better."

The Douser nodded philosophically. "Just like I said. We all carry the seeds of our own downfall. Schabold never knew reality in his life. He kept a roll of fat and bodyguards between himself and life. So what happened? He met me. I was real. I hurt. I was death, irritation and stuff he'd never really known. He couldn't get away from me. So he reverted to full childhood, pulled a baby's tantrum. His type is soft, once life bumps them they fall down all the way and are dragged back up with a noose around their throats. I tell you, sarge, it's sad."

Douser slid off the desk. "So there you are. More than one way to pin something on a guy. Let him do it himself. That's all I'm good for. I'm no sleuth. I just know how to bother people. Nuisance value. See you later, sarge."

The sarge said, "Where do you think you're going?"

Douser scowled. "Well, this morning's paper says Dutch Corelli is arriving on the one fifteen train today. I thought I'd go down and throw a mud-pie at him and study his reactions for future use."

"You might get hurt, Douser."

"Say, I never thought of that!" remarked the little guy.

A moment later he was running out into the sunshine, and the sarge was leaning back, shaking his head and cursing softly. . . .

TWENTY-THREE

ROCKET SKIN

Fear made him forget!

"How do you hold to a rocket?" shouted George Vanning, rushing through cold space.

"With your magnetics! Watch me! Like this!" cried Old Pop, like a vulture in armor.

The rocket belly hung over them. They were silver children hurtling to suckle its metal, to be nursed on duralloy and to be flung across the universe.

"What if I miscalculate?" George asked, fearfully.

"The jet-flame will eat you!" shouted the ancient hitch-hiker, still speeding.

CLANG!

"I've hit!" yelled George.

"Magnetics!" somebody ordered swiftly.

Thirteen men hit the hard rocket and dangled with magnetics juiced full, George Vanning among them. The rocket's acceleration quadrupled with a shuddering gout of flame. The rocket quivered and George quivered in sympathy.

The asteroids dropped away like exploded buckshot. Stars shone out all around. Another hitch-hiker swam up out of the dark sky ocean and strove to connect. George screamed him on. The man failed. He dove straight into the river of jet-flame!

The rocket was now mother to thirteen frightened, semi-frightened and casual children. Inside his bulger helmet, eating his air supply like an oxygen dinner, George Vanning felt his heart shaking out a loud rhythm. His eyes were wide in a pallid face.

His gun holster had been emptied by all the confusion and shrieking and fury of flight. He grabbed its emptiness with one free hand. An Interplanetary Patrol officer needed his pistol as he needed air. He was not through with fear yet, and he was on his way across millions of cool miles toward green-glowing Earth, twelve other men grouped in various positions about him, sweating salt and gasping thanks to the star-gods that they had safely contacted the Big Skin. They were pimples on it.

One of these hitch-hikers was a man George Vanning was seeking. Which one? He did not know yet. He was too cold with fright to know or care.

George cupped his heart with compressed lungs to hold its wild pounding. He had flown inside ships for ten of his thirty years, but this was his first jaunt outside where the meteors could mush you into orange jelly.

The huddled shapes flickered in uneasy light. Hitch-hikers, thousands of them, plying the space tides week on week, year on year. Think of it! The dangerous pastime and adventure of moneyless men and a few gaunt hard women.

And one of them, George's eyes narrowed and searched, was carrying back to Earth valuable military data, locked by psycho-impregnation into his completely unaware brain!

. . .

He relaxed his long thin muscles. His blue gloves and heavy boots were sealed safely to the hull. Now, with the men collected on either side of him, there was the long dark ahead, and his job to do.

Earth and Venus shone like stop-and-go lights far away. They did not, at this distance, look poised for combat. But war between them might explode any day now. Venusian citizens, however, were still unrestricted visitors to Mars and the asteroids, and while other communicative channels were forbidden them, they were shuttling valuable information back to Venus, and their secret agents on Earth, via some of the hitch-hikers' brains. On Earth and on Venus, these brains could be psychoanalyzed by their waiting scientists.

George adjusted himself in his hitch-hiker's disguise. In these last days of peace, Earth was conducting its military investigations in secret, so as not to impair diplomatic accord. It was up to himself, and men like him, riding other rocket Skins, to find and prevent the leakage of valuable detail. Peace itself might very well depend on their actions these next few weeks.

Shouts from the audio-phones broke his thoughts apart. Somebody screamed. George twisted.

One greenhorn was clinging to the Skin with only one magnetic claw. He struggled to complete connections with feet and free hand. But acceleration was ripping him loose.

"Help! Help me!" he shouted. "I'll fall! I'll burn!"

A bigger man lunged ponderously at the greenhorn, bellowing.

"Keep away!" the big man shoved. "Don't grab!"

"I can't hold! I'll die!"

"Die then!" the big man kicked. The generator bulge on the greenhorn's chrysalis collapsed in blue sizzling sparks.

The greenhorn vanished instantly. Torn loose like a stamp from its envelope, he fell back in space and, shrouded in flame-drift, was burnt to a silent cinder.

Wordlessly, the hitch-hikers shifted inside their space-suits. They eyed the big man fearfully, angrily. They edged off around the rim of their tiny rocket world.

The big man swung a menacing fist.

"Nobody come near me! Nobody!"

George Vanning tightened in his shell. He forgot he was not on the ground. He knew only anger which stamped out the fear that had been in him.

"You shouldn't have done that, big man," he said.

. . .

The big man stared at George and beyond him, his face circular and sunburnt and peeling. It was a young face with old eyes in it, a big face on a big man.

"Why that fellow tried to peel me off," he asserted indignantly. "It was either him or me."

"We don't want your kind riding the Skin with us," George said.

To himself, he thought: Is this the gent I'm searching for? Are the military plans sewed invisibly in his brain so even he himself doesn't know they're there? Just a log of small dark thoughts floating in his subconscious!

The big man's lips fluttered.

"I couldn't let that hysterical greenhorn kill me, could I?" he demanded.

Hot silence answered him.

Somewhere, somebody sobbed. George squinted to see who, and found it hard to find the body to fit the voice sucking and blowing in the phones. The sobbing sounded young and high. Fresh as green grass and yellow flowers.

He found the face, about fifteen yards up the hull, held tight in its vapor-jar. A raw young kid, thin as starlight, and no more than eighteen, was staring at the rocket flames and making tears.

"Shut up!" stormed the big man. "I can't stand crying!"

Another figure moved like a slow spider, starlight flickering from crucifixes that were welded to his shoulders and helmet. George recognized the familiar emblem of the space-philosopher, one of those lean, patient men who searched the starways year upon year, thinking their deep thoughts. This one reached the sobbing boy and comforted him with an arm, speaking softly.

"Stop it, both of you!" ordered the big man. "I'm sorry I shoved the greenhorn off. I'm sorry, I tell you! Now forget it!"

"Who're you to give orders?" someone snapped.

The big man glared.

"Who said that?" he demanded.

But there was only silence. There was no way of telling who had spoken. Finding no one, the big man fastened the blame on George Vanning. George began to sweat and want his gun back, very badly.

The big man looked at him, calmly, with decision, as if he had a sad job to do, but couldn't avoid doing it. He crawled slowly forward, toward George.

"Look everybody!" said George. "We've eleven against this one! Let's stick together. Let's act together, now!"

But nobody moved.

George swallowed thickly. The big man crawled closer.

"Look everybody," George pleaded, "this is our world the next five days. We can't contact those inside the ship, and so it's up to us—"

The big man released juice in one magnetic claw to shift it, put it down, gave it juice, arched his body caterpillarwise up, with power off in his midriff belt, then down again with power on. Next, his bulging blue legs moved, off power, on power.

They had an audience, George and the big man. Faces, upside down, sideways, were tensed and waiting.

The big man delicately snaked out a fist.

"Nobody stops me from going down to green Earth," he blustered. "I've got to go. Got to see the sun, warm and round as a yellow egg, and I've got to feel it hit me, hot, yellow, good." The big pink face looked for the molecule of sun, longed for it yearningly, and came down to George Vanning again. "And you're against me. You don't want me to go to Earth!"

He was very close to George.

"What's your name, big man?" George asked in a breath.

"Ellis," said the man, still coming.

"Well, look here, Ellis. You take another step and I'll kick your helmet face in!"

That stopped Ellis.

"Think it over." George made it brotherly. "You won't live two seconds with your mask shattered, mister."

Ellis thought it over. He sort of whimpered, then he sighed and collapsed against the hull wearily.

Everybody relaxed. Everybody clung to rocket skin, exhaling in relief, swearing softly. George and Ellis lay quietly.

A pounding jolt and a scream shocked them.

George tilted his head. So did Ellis. Up where there'd been a man on the prow was now a gleaming wet smudge and a dint in metal.

A meteor!

The philosopher knew what should be done.

"We'd better move down to the after-ferrel, where it's safe," he said in his quiet way. "The meteors will be thick as a slab of sin from here on, men."

Nobody argued.

Ellis was first among the yelling, scuttling men, chancing the momentum and acceleration that could pluck them off at a thousand miles per hour and shower them away into torches. Like frantic crawfish they wriggled down the Skin, slowly gaping at space, cursing, aware that the meteors coming at them could hammer and crush their brains and heels into one mess.

He'd been ten minutes on a rocket skin, thought George, and it felt like ten years!

. . .

A voice spoke.

"I'm frozen! I can't move!" it said. George Vanning recognized it. It belonged to the young greenhorn, the raw kid who had sobbed at seeing death. George turned. The philosopher was trying to help the kid move, but not succeeding.

"One hand at a time, my son," cautioned the philosopher. "One hand, and then the other, then your feet and mid-riff belt. Have faith, my son. Slowly now."

The young kid wore a bright new shiny bulger—an expensive one. A rich kid, no doubt, with adventurous ideas, run away from his papa's summer home on Mars.

The philosopher looked to George.

"You can help," he said. "You're an old hand at this."

George laughed.

"Has ten minutes of it aged me?" But he nudged the kid and asked his name, crawling up beside him to help.

"Tetley," stuttered the kid. "I can't move." His eyes tightened convulsively, his lips shivered. "I don't dare try to move. I don't want to die!"

A meteor flashed by, close as a breath. The blood pounded in George's neck.

"Look, Tetley," he said, grimly. "Did you ever mash a bug when you were a kid? Well, in about thirty seconds, if we don't move, a meteor will come walking by, and we'll be bugs. We'll look like a big scarlet symbol stamped on the ship's nub when she floats into Earth port. People'll squint up and say, 'They got a new coat-of-arms on the Rocket today.' Want them to say that, Tetley?"

Tetley moved.

"Take to it slow," whispered George, encouragingly. "A foot at a time. You'll be okay."

The three of them shifted like pawns in a chess game down the hull.

"Deacon," said George to the philosopher in sudden curiosity, "What are you doing out here, a billion miles from church?"

The philosopher looked straight ahead.

"This is the biggest darn cathedral I ever saw," he said, "and I didn't have to build it, praise the Lord!"

They laughed. They had to laugh at something, or go crazy.

The philosopher was looking at the stars.

"Look!" he said. "All the candles are lighted, and the black nuns of space are at benediction, dark and quiet, unmoving in their worship between the flames."

A meteor punctuated his sentence by striking the ship like a gong, just above them. The meteor sped on. George's heart went with it and came crashing back. He looked at Tetley and the Deacon, still crawling slowly, and he wondered if either of them held in his skull the secret for which he was searching. He'd have to find out.

"Pretty speaking, Deacon," he said.

The meteors poured down like a rain. But the men were safe now, in the after-ferrel.

Crouched under the protecting wing of the after-ferrel, big Ellis was a lonely man. No one lay within twenty yards of him.

George and the philosopher and young Tetley settled as far as possible above the huge, gushing channel of flame coming from the many jets.

Old Pop, the vulture-like ancient with a grey beard tucked into his visor, commented bitterly, as he settled his bones.

"Kept arguin' like fools up there when we shoulda been running!" he said. "All because of Ellis, another of us gets stomped on!"

Meteors raked the ship, plunging across its epidermis, giant fingers questing, skimming, stroking past, invisible until after they had passed on.

Most of the veteran hoboes lay near George Vanning, their faces gnarled, wrinkled, beaten by space, burnt by the sun, paled by the void-depths, thinned by years, veined by liquor, made feverish by desires on far stars. Their suits were age-crusted, battered, their bulger glass speckled, chipped and sanded thin by meteor dust. Is it one of them I'm looking for, George thought, one of these silent, easy men who takes the voyage as calmly as the sun shining?

But the meteors held his thoughts in abeyance. Watching the dark things fly by just out at arm's length, he didn't care about Earth or Venus or wars or military data or who carried it. He only thought of living.

. . .

He listened, and the only sound was the breathing of these men taking life this second, this moment, this hour. That and their heartpulses, drumming faintly over the audios now, but ready to burst into thunder at the slightest warning.

He was one with them. The rocket gave them purpose. All of them. Even Ellis! Let the rich dames ride inside this can, doling out four thousand credits for the privilege. Give a hard man four credits of food, two of oxygen, a credit's whiskey and water, half a credit of propulsive and magnetics, and he was ready to skip from Jupiter to Mercury and back, hop-scotching the asteroids. Cheap travel! What did they care if one out of three of them became a death statistic by the year's end!

Well, these star-hardened men began now to rail at Ellis, call him names, reveal their plans for him. Big Ellis clung trembling, silent, listening. It was apparent Ellis was an outsider, not of their type, and was not to be sustained by them.

Old Pop led the chastising.

"We've got a code of ethics, Ellis," the bearded man said bitterly. "In space, everything's against a man. He needs all the helping he can get!"

"We're going to get you, Ellis!" said another.

"We'll wait until you sleep, or try to sleep."

"Then we'll rip you off, and send you back where you belong!"

"Spread your atoms from here to the Moon!"

George Vanning listened, and figured. Which of these men was the most logically guilty of being the information agent? A man like the Deacon, quiet, gentle, unassuming? Young kid Tetley? Old Pop or the others? George's glance always returned to Ellis. Ellis, the outcast who didn't want to kill, but had killed.

Ellis, with an urge so strong to see the sun, was a perfect carrier for any message. His motive was strongest. He seemed to be going somewhere. The others were casual, easy men, who did not fight or kill to be hitch-hikers, and they respected each other's rights. The Venusians would not pick such casual men to entrust their data to. To be certain the stuff would smash through and not be diverted by ethics or fumbling, they would utilize a big man like Ellis with his big motives and his big strength.

The pounding of meteors continued. They thrashed, beat about the ship.

"Gentlemen, think of it," the philosopher said. "Beneath this welded dermis of the ship, peace, law, and order are almost in reach." He shook his head. "A few inches inward, someone strolls the ship's corridor, uncramped, talking quietly, unworried, maybe smoking a cigarette."

More meteors rained by, striking again with their sound like great gongs being beaten.

"Maybe holding a woman," piped Old Pop, wickedly.

"Maybe," said the philosopher, his eyes shining with thought. "Two worlds, gentlemen, each with its own character. Comfort on one side, agony the other. What a difference an inch of metal makes!"

Old Pop saw a hunk of metal wing by.

"Reminds me, I'd like a chew of tobacco," he whined.

"If you think about it, about how our lives depend on so many variables," said the philosopher. "Oxygen—"

Quickly, everyone checked oxygen-cans to see the contents. Eyes were squinted. Lips were licked.

"Food."

Gloves fumbled with dehydrated packets snapped to belts.

"Magnetics."

George Vanning happily saw his electrometer dial shiver high.

The philosopher listed more variables that chilled the blood:

"The pilot of this ship who sometimes takes a cocky notion to shake loose his outside family."

In the tense silence, they waited for the pilot to take a notion.

But the pilot apparently was a nice gent. Nothing happened.

Some of the men slept. Amidst grinding chaos, they snored softly in their phones. If death came in five seconds or five hours, they didn't want to know. They were tired of waiting for it.

One of the sleeping men vanished.

He didn't say good-by. He didn't even know he was going. His magnetics petered out unexpectedly and he floated away, still dreaming, into a deeper, fiery slumber.

George's stomach jerked hard in him. That empty area before him a moment ago had sustained a man! Whew!

. . .

Days passed as slowly as the stars wheeling around the all-encompassing sky. There wasn't a thing to do but keep your head down, shift position carefully, suck your food through a special tube arrangement, and dole out your precious little water. That, and talk. Talk and probe the other men to reveal their personalities, their living, their hopes and goals.

George Vanning compared them to Ellis, sized them up. Men named Simpson and Geneer and Schmidt and Haines and Johnson. Ellis was still being ignored steadfastly. He didn't bother anyone, and nobody bothered him. Even if they ganged up on him, one of them would be likely to fall off the rocket and be eaten up, in order to loosen Ellis. None of them chose to do so. But they were figuring a way.

They got to talking about their experiences, as if they were about a warm campfire.

"I thought this would be fun," Tetley said, like the green kid he was. "I'd heard about space-skinners for years, how they worked, what they did, and I—I thought I'd try it. I'm sorry. I'd give anything to be swimming in a Martian canal right now, I would, oh how I would!"

The others laughed good-naturedly. They had to take turns talking. Everybody could hear what everyone else said, including burps and hiccups. There was no privacy in any conversation, no matter what it was. Sometimes, everybody talked at once, and their voices collided. Then they laughed and there was silence. Everyone waited for someone else to speak the next word. Nobody would volunteer.

"Well, somebody say something!" someone would prompt, and then they'd be off again.

Old Pop talked through his whiskers.

"Me, I been bucking rockets for years," he said. "Some of my best friends are cinders."

Laughter greeted his remark.

"I hitch-hike up to Jupiter," he went on, "and I mine uranium. I fall down to Mercury and collect gewgaws. I buck over to Venus and dig rommalu crystals. Why, man, I wouldn't stick on the ground if you gave it to me!"

Slim Jenks, an ore-slinger with a celery-stalk neck and pouched blue eyes, had been wolf-howling the asteroids fifteen years now, he reckoned.

"I like women-folks," he said. "Tall ones, short ones. Ones with four arms, five legs and in assorted colors from pink-furry to blue Martian ones."

Everybody spoke. There was talk of hard, pulsing years, the old days, the first tubs, the greenhorns, the hobo camps on the dim asteroids.

Ellis watched, eyes gleaming, mouth working like a kid. He waited until they all had spoken and then he wet his lips.

"I—" he began.

"Shut up!" snarled Old Pop.

"I—"

"You heard me! Blast you, shut up!"

"Let him talk," George Vanning interposed. "I want to hear his story."

Old Pop subsided after objecting some more, and Ellis, with almost a grateful nod at George, started out.

"I been cold a long time," he said. "I was born and raised on Pluto. My sun was a Christmas tree ornament way up on the top of the great branches of space, where it was small and I couldn't touch or feel or hardly see it." His voice was wistful now. "You know how it is, you understand, don't you? I—I've never seen Earth. I've heard about it. You men, you've known it all your lives. You've known the real sun, the big, round, yellow sun. My sun was withered, a pin-prick, cold and removed. I was cold every day and every day and every day."

The monotone rose and fell. A shiver traveled up George's neck, and he closed his eyes as he listened to the rest of it.

"So I worked," Ellis went on. "I saved my money. And I hitch-hiked down the stars—from Pluto to Neptune, Neptune to Jupiter, Jupiter to Mars, and here I am, after all those millions of miles, all those long cold years of traveling, and I killed a man. But I didn't want to, and I don't know why I did it, and"—his voice went off into a hoarse whisper—"I'm sorry. I'm sorry."

Nobody spoke.

"You men," Ellis whispered the rest of it. "You take the sun for granted, take it or leave it. But just seeing green grass once, just once, is all I want in life. That's why I'm traveling. That's why, I guess, I killed a man."

"Did you stay on Mars long?" George Vanning asked.

"A week."

"See any Venusians there?"

"A couple. One night, I was drinking. I passed out. Why?"

"Nothing," said George.

Nothing, except that Ellis was the man he wanted, he thought. Nothing whatsoever except that! Nothing except that he and Ellis must float down to Earth together, and that nothing must separate them. Not these men and their planned vengeance, nor flame, nor meteors, nor anything else. If Ellis became a cinder now, the evidence would be destroyed. It must be brought intact to the Earth officials.

A little game began to be played. Old Pop started it out, and Schmidt and Johnson and the others joined.

"So you like the sun, Ellis?"

"Pretty, pretty sun. Pretty pretty!"

Ellis did not shout back at them, but turned his eyes upward toward the brilliant, expanding, solar orb.

. . .

More days passed. The men kept at their game with Ellis, taunting him about the pretty, pretty sun. He did not answer, but looked for solace at the warm round ball of fire in the void.

George Vanning slept fitfully. Finally, exhausted, on the sixth day, he fell into a deep slumber.

He was wakened abruptly by shouting. There was a change of motion and weight. He glanced fearfully back. He grinned at what he saw. The tail of the rocket was cut. The flame ribbon was gone!

"The power's off!" croaked Old Pop. "It's off!"

"Earth!" Tetley was smiling for the first time. "Look at it!"

Earth was big, surrounding them almost to the limit of their seeing, and beyond it was the sun! The rocket was preparing to land.

There was a tremendous adjusting, stirring, reacclimation of blue-bulgers, and of the bodies sweat-caked inside them. The men were like locusts warming to life after seventeen years in the dark rich space loam. The Earth molded solid all dreams, wishes and plans!

And then Ellis' voice beat upon the excitement.

"Earth?" he stumbled. "Where's Earth?"

Everybody shut up.

"What's wrong, mister?" Old Pop grinned.

"Where's Earth?" Ellis said it again. "Where—where are the stars? The sun!"

George stared at him, unbelievingly. The man was joking! He had to be.

"The sun's right up there," Tetley said, grinning. "See it? And the Earth, too. And you can still make out a few stars."

Everybody agreed, shaking heads, laughing. George Vanning's blood pulsed cold.

Ellis raised one metal-fingered glove, extending it as if to touch something not quite tangible.

"Where?" he husked. And a moment later, eyes wide, "Where's everybody!"

"Here, around you," retorted the philosopher worriedly.

"I can't—see anything," Ellis replied, choking. "I'm blind!"

"Right on schedule," said Old Pop, a grin spreading apart his beard. "Just like I figured. Just the way we wanted it. Well, you were lookin' for the sun, mister. Did you find it good?"

"I'm blind," gasped Ellis. "You—"

"You should have known better than to look too long at the sun in space, mister," Pop said. "Bad for the eyes. That was the general idea of us pokin' fun

at you about it. The more we gibed, the more you looked! Bingo. You're blind! Well, bye-bye, mister, sure nice to have known you!"

"You can't leave me here," pleaded Ellis. "I can't see."

He was pushed out of focus by the emergency of the next few moments. The rustling of gloves, the gasp of breath through clenched teeth, the preparation for getting away from the mother Skin—all of that drowned out his pleading.

George Vanning lay against the ship with cold hatred for these men in him. They had deliberately irritated Ellis into exposing his eyes! They had done that, and now they were leaving. They had said they would get Ellis, and now they would get him, simply by leaving him alone on the ship as they fell away.

"Let's get movin'!" shouted Old Pop.

Toggles were unsealed. Feet were pushed free. Faces behind glassite shields blinked upward fearfully. Any moment, the decelerating jets, bored in the nose of the rocket, might spill flame. It would hurl back over them in a mighty stream. They were getting out now, with no time to comment about Ellis' reward.

"Cheerio, people!"

"See you in church!"

"So long!"

"Good boy, Ellis. Play with the sun!"

. . .

One, two, three. George Vanning counted the men as they peeled off in blue-electric flickers. Silver hummingbirds did not hover and vanish so swiftly as they did. Their voices fell down a well of dark emptiness, out of hearing.

Four, five, six. Six men freed of their electrical bondage, no more to be mothered by passionless duralloy, no more to clutch the Skin and sing for their safety!

The philosopher hadn't even given them his usual blessing, as they were swallowed by space. He was too busy crawling across the Great Skin. Ellis was still choking and pleading and raging inside his helmet about the sudden dark night, and the remaining men, all except bearded Old Pop and George and the philosopher had vanished.

Old Pop intercepted the philosopher in his great hurry.

"Where do you think you're going?" he demanded.

The philosopher answered quietly. He apparently still remembered he was in Church, the big Church that Someone Else had built.

"Get out of my way, man," he said. "We can't leave a blind man here. There's no time to argue space codes and ethics now. I'll take care of Ellis myself."

"You're not going to help him one bit, mister," Old Pop warned. "He stays here. You're coming along with me."

Without another word, Old Pop grabbed the philosopher in grizzled arms and kicked loose.

They were both gone before George Vanning could yell.

Everyone was gone now, each with his dream, his plan, his future. Young Tetley was gone. Maybe they'd never meet again. Tetley might drop by parachute in Kansas, Old Pop and the philosopher in Missouri,—and the others anywhere from Texas to Illinois.

Ellis stretched out a groping hand.

"They're gone. All gone." He tried to see. "But someone must be left."

George cleared his throat.

"Who is it?" cried Ellis.

George crawled toward the man.

"Don't leave me here," pleaded Ellis. "Don't. I didn't mean to kill that man. I've never hurt a thing in my life."

"I know," said George. "Here. Hold onto me."

"Who are you?" asked Ellis.

"It doesn't matter. I'll guide you. I know a hospital on Earth. They'll fix your eyes. It's a temporary blindness. Hold on!"

Ellis held to him, frantically.

"Peel off!"

The rocket went on without them. They dropped. The continent rushed up, green and new, breath-taking in its beauty. Somewhere below, thought George, the Venusian agents waiting on the rim of a hobo camp to get Ellis. But only Earthmen would get first crack at unlocking his brain, and they'd erase what they found and Ellis would be free, free even of a murder he wouldn't have done but for the men from Venus.

Still clinging together, they used propulsives to cushion their fall, and then flowered open their parachutes and floated down toward Earth, their new mother, which rose to hold them in arms of mist.

"Open your helmet locks!" commanded George. "Open up!"

They snapped locks together, swung lids up.

"Smell that!" exulted George. "Earth air! Real fresh green air! And that other stuff? Stick your fingers out. Peel off your gloves and feel! Sunlight! The big sun, the yellow sun!"

"The big sun!" Ellis cupped out hungry fingers to scoop the amber rays as he swung back and forth in the crystal air. He sounded as if he were in church. "It's been such a long, long time. The big sun!"

"I know how you feel." George hung trembling in his paraharness, exhilarated. "I've been stationed ten years on the dark asteroids. Yeah, ten years. I've been cold, too. My sun was small. And I was promised a transfer to Earth if I did a little job. A job I'm just finishing now. Something you don't even know about. And, I tell you, that sun is something new to me, too!"

They dropped together in swift pendulums, smelling the moist air all around them, and not knowing any more words to express the joy they felt.

TWENTY-FOUR

FORGOTTEN MAN (IT BURNS ME UP!)

I am lying here in the very center of the room and I am not mad, I am not angry, I am not perturbed. In the first place, in order for a man to be perturbed, angry, mad, he must recognize some stimulus from outside which touches his nerves. The nerves flash a message to the brain. The brain kicks back quick orders to all parts of the body: be angry, be mad, be disturbed! Eyelashes, pull back from eyes, let eyes protrude, muscles work! Iris dilate! Mouth pull back tight from teeth! Ears blush! Brow furrow! Heart beat! Blood surge! Get angry, get perturbed, get mad!

But my eyelashes will not pull back. My eyes simply stare vacantly at a colorless, dark ceiling, my heart lies cold, my mouth is limp, my fingers are laxed. I do not madden. I do not anger or perturb. And yet I have every reason to be irritated.

The detectives are swaggering about my house, swearing in the rooms, honking in the night, drinking from bottles in the alley. Reporters are flashing quick bulbs at my relaxed body. The flash eyes are glinting into electrical powder, exploding. The neighbors are peering in at the windows. My wife is lying in a chair, turned away from me, and instead of crying she is very glad.

You understand, then, I have reason to be mad. But no matter how hard I try to be incensed, fuming, swearing, I cannot. Nothing responds. There is only an encompassing cold weightlessness over and through me.

I am dead.

I lie here, sleeping, and these people are the fragments of my bloodless dreaming. They move about me, as carrion-eaters over a decaying carcass, carnivores lusting on the hot spilled blood of killing at night, taking that blood and respilling it upon the pages of tabloid papers. But somehow in the transition from body to thrashing presses, the blood has turned an ungodly black.

A little blood will ink a million print-drums. A little blood is chemical enough to drive ten million presses. A little blood is adrenalin enough to pound thirty million literate, reading hearts.

Tonight, I have died. Tomorrow morning I will die again in thirty million brains, caught like a fly in a web, sucked dry by the multi-tentacled public, and flushed on through the transits of their minds to be replaced by:

HEIRESS MARRIES DUKE!
INCOME TAX INCREASE DUE!
COAL MINERS STRIKE!

. . .

So here are the vultures circling over me. Here is the coroner, casually examining my vitals, the hyena newsmen digging at the dead thoughts of my love. And here the fauns and the goats with synthetic lion hearts, peering timidly in the window, but safely removed from terror, watching the carnivores stalk about, pruning their manes.

Perhaps my wife is cleverest of them all. She resembles nothing more than a small soft, dark leopard whiskering and licking itself, pleased with its actions, crouched within the chair's patterned inclosure.

The detective immediately overhead now, like a gigantic lion moving in that world of live people, is a large-lipped man. His lips are vised about a long smoking cigar, and he talks with that vise, his teeth gleaming in amber flashes. Once in awhile he drops grey ash on my coat. He is talking:

"Well, so he's dead. So we talk to *her* for an hour, two hours, three, four, and what do we get? Nothing! Hell, we can't stay here all night! My wife'll kill me! I'm never home nights anymore. More damn murders."

The coroner, so brisk, so efficient, his fingers like inquisitive calipers, measures my circumference, my diameter. Is there anything but the purest professional interest behind his slanted, sad green eyes? He lifts his head at an imperious angle and makes his speech importantly:

"Died quickly. That knife certainly did things to his throat. And then, who ever did it stabbed him three times in the chest. A very nice job. Impressively bloody."

The detective jerks his bronze-haired head at my wife, wincing, "And she ain't got a blood-speck on her! How you figger that?"

"What does *she* say?" asks the coroner.

"She *don't* say. She just plumps there crooning to herself and singing, 'I won't spill till I see my lawyer.' Honest to God!" The detective can't fathom the ways of cat women. But, lying here, *I* can.

"That's all she'll say. 'I won't spill till I see my lawyer' over and over, like a damn-fool nursery rhyme."

. . .

There is a body scuffle at the door that directs all attentions, immediately. A handsome, finely-muscled reporter is wrestling to get in.

"Hey!" The detective pushes out his cliff of chest. He bites the cigar fiercely. "Whatinell goes on?"

A cop face pokes in, hot, struggling. "This gink wants in, boss!"

"Who in hell does he think *he* is?" asks the detective.

The reporter's voice from a distance . . . "Carlton of the *Tribune.* H. J. Randolph sent me."

The detective blows up. "Kelly, you fool! Let the guy in! Randolph and I went to school together! Sure!"

"Ha, *ha!*" says the coroner, dead-pan.

The detective shoots him a hot glance, while the officer Kelly gives way and the reporter Carlton strides sweating inside.

"I had to get in," laughs Carlton. "Or it was my job."

"Hello, Carlton," the detective laughs again. "Pull up a corpse and sit down."

That is a joke. Everybody laughs, except my wife who is curled in a feminine S within the chair arms, contentedly licking her lips like a fed cat.

The other reporters resent Carlton's entrance. They say nothing. Carlton looks at me with his baby-blue eyes:

"Well, a self-surgery! Ear to ear! How will he talk to Saint Peter in that condition?"

The coroner is proud. "Oh, I will sew him up new as paint. I am pretty good at fixing stuff like that. Comes from long practice."

Carlton rushes on, ignoring the coroner, intrigued with scribbling hieroglyphics on papers, shooting questions. He grins while scribbling. "Hotsy-totsy. Love nest, maybe. All the trimmings. God, he looks like Christmas, don't he? Green around the gills and big red ribbons of blood tied in coagulated bows."

Even the detective cannot stomach this and coughs a little. For the first time my wife doesn't look calm and cool as cream in her chair. It is momentary. It passes. Again she adjusts the rim of her chartreuse skirt over her curvesome legs, blinking at the new reporter as if to fan his attention to flame.

But now the reporter is kneeling at the altar of my desecrated flesh. A cold marble altar, exquisitely carved by the original hands of God, and only recently recarved by—someone.

Mrs. McLeod, from next door, is looking through the south window from outside, on fat tiptoe, her shining grey eyes hippopotamus-like in the night. Her voice is vague, and she is shivering on purpose:

"Wait until I write Susan in Springfield. Will she be jealous. My very own mysterious murder in my own front yard, almost. Who would have thought we'd have things like this in *our* neighborhood? I tell you, though, Anna, come look—. See, that's the detective, that man with the fat under his chin. He don't look like a detective to me, does he to you? He looks like a pot-beer, a villain. Now, take that young reporter guy, he looks just like Philo Vance, only younger. I bet he'll be the one who really solves the case. But they never get the credit, that's the way. Just look at that woman over there in the corner. I bet she was his mistress, not his wife—"

"Get away from the window, lady!"

"Well, I guess I got a right to look in!"

"Lady, move along!"

"Young man, I own this lawn right up to the window. This is my house! I rented it to Mr. Jameson myself."

"Lady, move along."

"Young man—"

That will do, Mrs. McLeod, that will do for a long time.

. . .

Now, back to the people in the room.

The reporter, Carlton, is now attracted as a planet is attracted to the sun, by my wife. He is darting questions at her, and she is deliberately stalling him. The reporter is fast, and my wife is languid, heavy-lidded and easy-going. She will not be pushed, pell-melled into anything. She will simply have her say. She says it, purringly: "I came home from the nightclub and there he was lying on the floor, staring at the ceiling. That is all I know."

The other reporters scribble, too. They had not gotten a thing from her, until handsome Carlton showed up. Carlton cracks back at her, "You sing at the nightclub Bomba?"

"Yes. I'm a very good singer. I can hit a C above high C if you want. Once I had a chance with the Metropolitan Opera Company. But I didn't consider it; I don't like them."

The coroner has an opinion of this chatter. He does not express it. But he has the same expression on his face that I once had. The coroner and the detective are both irked because the limelight has swiveled from them and their stage to this little chittering divertissement between man and woman. The detective especially is annoyed because he was unable to pry anything out of my wife except her sing-song pleading for a lawyer and now this young reporter—

Somebody outside hoists a small girl up to the window. She is framed in it momentarily.

"Look, baby, you may never see anything like that—"

"Oh, mama, what's wrong with that man?"

"Move along, lady, please. I just chased a couple people away, and I'm tired. I been on my feet all evening. Move away—"

"Oh, mama!"

I am now immortal! Caught in that child's mind I shall be dead forevermore, and on dark nights I will stride drunkenly through the shivering corridors of her body. And she will waken shrieking, ripping the bedclothes apart. Someday her husband will feel her red fingernails in his fleshy arm, and that will be me, in the middle-dark, reaching out a constricting claw to clutch again at life!

"Can it, *can* it!" suggests the detective, glaring hotly at the reporter, Carlton. "I'm the one who interviews her! Not *you,* bozo!"

The lips of Carlton go down. He opens his hands and shrugs slightly, "But you want a good report for the paper, Captain, don't you? With pictures? Sure you do. And I got to get details."

He is getting the details fine. My wife has a thirty-three bust, twenty-eight waist, thirty-one hips. These details are being scribbled on a brain-pad somewhere within the reporter. Remind him, someone, to call her up after the funeral.

The coroner clears his throat. "Now, about this body—"

Yeah, for God's sake, gentlemen, let's get back to me. What am I lying here for?

Carlton snaps his voice like snapping his thin fingers, "You had a lot of men tagging after you, didn't you, madame?"

My wife lids her eyes and unlids them. "Yes, I've always been popular. Couldn't help it, I guess. He—" she shakes her head at me, "he never seemed to mind the other men tagging at my heels. It sort of upheld his judgment in marrying a—thoroughbred."

The coroner quickly jabs my ribs in some medical joke. He busies himself over me to keep from snorting out a laugh at her choice of words.

The other reporters are now buzzing like a hive of tipped bees. My wife would not talk for *them,* but perhaps there is a provocative angle to Carlton's body, perhaps there is something about his look or his lips or the cast of his shoulders . . . anyway, the reporters are angry, "Come off it, Carlton, let us have a try!"

Carlton turns to the detective. "Who did the killing, captain?"

"We're rounding up all her boyfriends," says the detective intelligently, nodding, thinking it over.

Carlton nods, too, and half-listening, looking sidewise and gleaming at my wife, checks his notes solemnly, salutes my cold body and marches across the room. "Thanks, thanks, thanks, I'll be right back. Want to phone a call. Keep up the good work." To me, grinning, "Don't wait up for me, darling."

Slam. The door closes.

. . .

"Well," sighs the detective, "we've done all we can here. Fingerprints. Clues. Photographs. Grillings. I guess we can let the body—" He stops, flushing, giving way to the coroner, who, after all, has the right to make his little official announcements.

The coroner acknowledges this courtesy and says, after a due period of serious thought, "I think we can take the body away now. Yes."

One of the remaining reporters pipes, "Say, Sherlock, you think this is a suicide set-up? If you ask me—"

"I'm not asking," says the detective. "How would you explain them stab wounds?"

"I see it this way," the coroner interrupts. "She comes home, finds him freshly dead on the floor, having just killed himself. That explains how she has no blood

on her from a spurting jugular. Evidently she took the suicide weapon and stabbed him three times in a frenzy of—shall we say—delight? She was glad to find him dead, and let herself go. There's no blood in these stab wounds, that proves he was stabbed later, after she found him lying there."

"No, no, now," roars the detective. "You're *all* wrong! You're dead wrong! That's not the way it worked at all! Not at all!" He launches himself, shaking his hair over his eyes, blundering off down blind alleys, kidding himself, chewing his cigar, pounding one fist into one palm. "No, no, you're all wrong!"

The coroner chucks me in the ribs. He looks at me. I look back with nothing in my eyes except cold shining light.

"Oh, but the coroner is right!" My wife, with the swiftness of a leopard paw darting, seizes upon this information and makes it her own. "He's exactly right!"

"Now wait a minute," complains the detective, seeing his case being torn from his hands.

"That's how it was," my wife insists, purring. She blinks big wet dark eyes. "I came in. He was lying there. And—something—came over me. I must've just seized the dagger and yelled I was glad he was dead and stabbed him some more!"

"But," wails the detective feebly, "that just can't be the way it happened." He knows it may be true, but he is slow coming back to reality. In a moment he will stomp his feet like a hurt child.

"That's how it happened," she says.

"Well now, it stands to reason," reasons the detective vaguely. He purposely drops his cigar so he'll have time to pick it up, brush it off and put it in his mouth before he has to think. "Well, it just don't work out that way," he says tiredly.

The coroner takes over, "Young woman, you won't be prosecuted for murder, but you'll be fined for mutilating a corpse!"

"Shut up, you!" cries the detective, whirling in all directions.

"That's all right," confides my wife. "Fine me. Go ahead."

The reporters are yelling, adding to the wild pattern of voices.

"Is that true, Mrs. Jameson?"

"You may quote me. It is true."

"Oh, God!" cries the detective.

My wife is tearing the case to shreds with her enameled claws, fondling it, loving it, ripping it carefully and intentionally down the middle, while the detective gapes and tries to shut her up.

"Don't pay any attention to her, boys!"

"But it's the truth," she says with honesty in her eyes.

"See?" chortle the reporters.

"Everybody clear out!" yells the detective. "I've had enough!"

But the case is closed. The reporters, laughing, declare it so. Bulbs flare, my wife winks prettily for them. The detective sees the credit for solving the case go

fleeting. He manages to calm down, "Say, say, boys, about those pictures of me for the paper, now—"

"What pictures? Ha. Period. Ha. Exclamation point. Ha!"

"Clear out, everybody!" the detective rams his cigar into an ashtray. Parts of it fall on me. Nobody brushes them off.

The coroner is grinning, and outside the window an audience is watching, breathless. One might expect applause any moment.

It is all over. Peever, the detective jerks his head, "Come on, Mrs. Jameson. You reporters want any more, come along to the station."

There is a movement of bodies through the air, over the carpet, through the door. "Boy, what a story! Hotsy, what photographs!"

"Quick, Alice, look through the window. They're going to take him out!"

Someone drops a cloth over my profile.

"Oh, darn it, we're too late. Now we can't see *any*thing!"

They leave the room, these reporters with their images of me, one of them even in color, carried under careless, joyful arms. Everybody is rushing for the early morning edition.

. . .

I am pleased. I died before midnight. Therefore I will make the morning paper. Mr. Jones will pick me up with his Sanka. Thoughtful of me.

The detective is making a face. My wife arises and leaves the room. One cop outside the door nods at another cop, "How about some hotcakes and syrup down at the White Log?"

I cannot even lick my lips.

Wearily, the detective mops his brow. He unsheathes a fresh cigar and spits the bit end of it at my feet. He doesn't speak but he thinks a lot. By his face, he is a man with a dominant wife. He is dreading going home to her now; he likes to idle, stay out all night. Bodies give him an excuse. I'm a pretty good one. But I'm not worth much now. He will make a routine report and go home.

The coroner is the only one left. He pats me on the shoulder. "Nobody asked you any questions did they? Well, friend, what about it? Were you murdered by her or her friends, or did you kill yourself over—her. Huh? A fool in love is twice a fool."

Me, I won't talk.

It is late. The coroner leaves. Maybe he has a wife, too. Maybe he likes bodies because they don't argue back like some people.

I'm alone now.

In a few minutes a couple internes will come in in their whites, chewing gum. They'll glance casually at me, tilt me over onto a stretcher languidly and trot me downtown in a slow wagon, in no hurry.

And a week from now a man who is worrying about his income tax will turn a handle and flames will burn me. I will rush up the flue of the crematory in so many grey flecks.

And with some sort of ironic justice, and the providence of a stiff March wind, a week from now, when these various people—Carlton, my wife, the detective, the coroner, the reporters, Mrs. McLeod—when all these people are crossing the street, maybe suddenly they'll get something in their damned eyes! *All* of them!

Little pieces of grey ash, maybe.

TWENTY-FIVE

THE JAR

It was one of those things they keep in a jar in the tent of a sideshow on the outskirts of a little, drowsy town. One of those pale things drifting in alcohol plasma, forever dreaming and circling, with its peeled dead eyes staring out at you and never seeing you. It went with the noiselessness of late night, and only the crickets chirping, the frogs sobbing off in the moist swampland. One of those things in a big jar that makes your stomach jump like it does when you see an amputated arm in a laboratory vat.

Charlie stared back at it for a long time.

A long time, his big raw hands, hairy on the roofs of them, clenching the rope that kept back curious people. He had paid his dime and now he stared.

It was getting late. The merry-go-round drowsed down to a lazy mechanical tinkle. Tentpeggers back of a canvas smoked and cursed over a poker game. Lights switched out, putting a summer gloom over the carnival. People streamed homeward in cliques and queues. Somewhere, a radio flared up, then cut, leaving Louisiana sky wide and silent with stars peppering it.

There was nothing in the world for Charlie but that pale thing sealed in its universe of serum. Charlie's loose mouth hung open in a pink weal, teeth showing, eyes puzzled, admiring, wondering.

Someone trotted in the shadows behind him, small beside Charlie's giant tallness. "Oh," said the shadow, coming into the light-bulb glare. "You still here, bud?"

"Yeah," said Charlie, irritated his thoughts were touched.

The carny-boss appreciated Charlie's curiosity. He nodded at his old acquaintance in the jar. "Everybody likes it; in a peculiar kinda way, I mean."

Charlie rubbed his long jawbone. "You—uh—ever consider selling it?"

The carny-boss' eyes dilated, then closed. He snorted. "Naw. It brings customers. They like seeing stuff like that. Sure."

Charlie made a disappointed, "Oh."

"Well," considered the carny-boss, "if a guy had money, maybe—"

"How much money?"

"If a guy had—" the carny-boss estimated, squinting eyes, counting on fingers, watching Charlie as he tacked it out one finger after another. "If a guy had three, four, say, maybe seven or eight—"

Charlie nodded with each motion, expectantly. Seeing this, the carny-boss raised his total, "—maybe ten dollars, or maybe fifteen—"

Charlie scowled, worried. The carny-boss retreated, "Say a guy has *twelve* dollars—" Charlie grinned. "Why, he could buy that thing in that jar," concluded the carny-boss.

"Funny thing," said Charlie, "I got just twelve bucks in my denims. And I been reckoning how looked up to I'd be back down at Wilder's Hollow if I brung home something like this to set on my shelf over the table. The guys would sure look up to me then, I bet."

"*Well,* now, listen here—" said the carny-boss.

The sale was completed with the jar put on the back seat of Charlie's wagon. The horse skittered its hoofs when it saw it, and whinnied.

The carny-boss glanced up with an expression of, almost, relief. "I was tired of seeing the thing around. Don't thank me. Lately I been thinking things about it, funny things—don't mind me, I'm just a big-mouth. S'long, farmer!"

Charlie drove off. The naked blue light bulbs withdrew like dying stars, the open dark country night of Louisiana swept in around wagon and horse. The brass merry-go-round clanking faded. There was just Charlie, the horse timing its grey hoofs, and the crickets.

And the jar behind the high-seat.

It sloshed back and forth, back and forth. Sloshed wet. And the cold grey thing drowsily slumped against the glass, looking out, looking out, but seeing nothing, nothing, nothing.

Charlie leaned back to pet the lid. Smelling of strange liquor his hand returned, changed and cold and trembling, excited. He was bright scarlet happy about this. *Yes, sir!*

Slosh, slosh, slosh. . . .

. . .

In the Hollow numerous grass-green and blood-red lanterns tossed dusty light over men huddled, chanting, spitting, sitting on General Store property.

They knew the creak-bumble of Charlie's vehicle and did not shift their raw, drabhaired skulls as he rocked to a halt. Their cigars were nicotine glow-worms crawling from political lips to knee-perches and return-trip. Their voices were frog mutterings in summer night.

Charlie leaned at an eager angle. "Hi, Clem. Hi, Milt."

"Lo, Charlie. Lo, Charlie," they murmured. The political conflict continued. Charlie cut it down the seam:

"I got somethin' here. I got somethin' you might wanna see!"

Tom Carmody's eyes glinted, green in the lamp-light, from the General Store porch. It seemed to Charlie that Tom Carmody was forever installed under porches in shadow, or under trees in shadow, or if in a room in the farthest niche, showing his eyes out at you from his dark. You never knew what his face was doing, and his eyes were always funning you. And every time they looked at you they laughed a different way:

"You ain't got nothin' we wants ta see, you dumb sheebaw!"

Charlie made a fist with a blunt-knuckle fringe: "Somethin' in a jar," he went on. "Looks kine a like a brain, kine a like a pickled wolf, kine a like—well come look yourself!"

Somebody snicked their cigar into a fall of pink ash and ambled over to look. Charlie grandly elevated the jar-lid, and in the uncertain lantern-light the man's face changed. "Hey, now, what in hell *is* this—"

It was the first thaw of the night. Others shifted lazily upright, leaned forward; gravity pulled them into walking. They made no effort, except to keep one shoe afore the other, to keep from collapsing upon their unusual faces. They circled the jar and contents. And Charlie, first time in his life, seized upon some strategy and clapped the lid down with a glass clatter:

"You want to see more, drop around to my house. It'll be there," he declared, generously.

Tom Carmody spat from out his porch eyrie. "Ha!"

"Lemme see thet again," cried Gramps Medknowe. "Is it a brain?"

Charlie flapped the reins and the horse stumbled into action.

"Come on around! You're welcome!"

"What'll your wife say?"

"She'll kick the tar off our heels!"

But Charlie and wagon were gone over the hill. They stood around, all of them, chewing tongues, squinting after. Tom Carmody swore softly from the porch. . . .

. . .

As Charlie climbed the steps of his shack, carrying the jar to its throne in the living room, he thought that from now on the place would be a palace. The incumbent king swam without moving in his private pool, raised, elevated upon his shelf over the table.

This jar was the one thing that dispelled the gray sameness that hung over the place on the swamp-rim.

"What've you got there?"

Thedy's thin soprano turned him from his admiration. She stood in the bedroom door glaring out, her thin body clothed in faded blue gingham, her hair

drawn to a drab knot behind red ears. Her eyes were faded like the gingham. "Well," she repeated. "What is it?"

"What does it look like to you, Thedy?"

She took a thin step forward, making a slow indolent pendulum of hips. Her eyes were intent upon the jar, her lips drawing back to show feline milk teeth.

The dead pale thing hung in its serum. Thedy snapped a dull-blue glance at Charlie, then back to the jar, and swept around quickly to clutch the wall. "It—it looks just like—YOU—Charlie!" she shouted hoarsely.

The door slammed behind her!

The reverberation did not disturb the jar's contents. But Charlie stood there, longing after her, neck muscles long, taut, heart pounding frantically, and then after his heart slowed a bit, he talked to the thing in the jar:

"I work the bottom-land to the buttbone ever' year, and she takes the money and rushes off down home visitin' her folks, nine weeks at a stretch. I can't keep holt of her. She and the men from the store make fun of me. I can't help it if I'm not whip smart."

Philosophically, the contents of the jar gave no advice.

"Charlie?"

Someone stood in the door.

Charlie turned, startled, then broke out a grin.

It was some of the men from the General Store.

"Uh—Charlie—we—that is—we thought—well—we came up to have a look at that—stuff—you got in that there jar—"

. . .

July passed warm, and it was August.

For the first time in years, Charlie was happy as tall corn growing after a drought. It was gratifying of an evening to hear boots shushing through the tall grass, the sound of men spitting into the ditch prior to setting foot on the porch, the sound of heavy bodies creaking across it, and the groan of the house as yet another shoulder leaned against its frame door and another voice said, as a hairy arm wiped clean the questioning mouth:

"Kin I come in?"

With elaborate casualness, Charlie'd invite the arrivals in. There'd be chairs, soap-boxes for all, or at least carpets to squat on. And by the time crickets were itching their legs into a summertime humming, and frogs were throat swollen like ladies with goiters belching in the great night, the room would be full to bursting with people from all the bottom lands.

At first nobody would say nothing. The first half hour of such an evening, while people came in and got settled, was spent in carefully rolling cigarettes. Putting tobacco neatly into the rut of brown paper, loading it, tamping it, as they loaded and tamped and rolled their thoughts and fears and amazement for the

evening. It gave them time to think. You could see their brain working behind their eyes as they fingered the cigarettes into smoking order.

It was kind of a rude church gathering. They sat, squatted, leaned on plaster walls, and one by one, with reverent awe, they stared at the jar upon its shelf.

They wouldn't stare sudden like. That would've been irreverent. No, they kind of did it slow, casual, as if they were glancing around the room—letting eyes fumble over just *any* old object that happened into their consciousness.

And—just by accident, of course—the focus of their wandering eyes would occur always at the same place. After awhile all eyes in the room would be fastened to it, like pins stuck in some incredible pincushion. And the only sound would be some one sucking a corn-cob. Or the children's barefooted scurry on the porch planks outside. Maybe some woman's voice would come, "You kids git away, now! Git!" And with a giggle like a soft, quick water, the bare feet would rush off to scare the bull-frogs.

Charlie would be up front, naturally, on his rocking chair, a plaid quilt under his lean rump, rocking slow, enjoying the fame and looked-up-toedness that came with keeping the jar.

Thedy, she'd be seen way back of the room with the women folks in a bunch like grey grapes, abiding their menfolk.

Thedy looked like she was ripe for jealous screaming. But she said nothing, just watched men tromp into her living room and set at the feet of Charlie staring at this here Holy Grail-like thing, and her lips were set as seven-day concrete and she spoke not a civil word to nobody.

After a period of proper silence, someone, maybe old Gramps Medknowe from Creek Road, would clear the phlegm from his old throat's cavern, lean forward, blinking, wet his lips, maybe, and there'd be a curious tremble in his calloused fingers.

This would cue everyone to get ready for the talking to come. Ears were primed. People settled as much as sows in warm mud after the rain.

. . .

Gramps looked a long while, measured his lips with a lizard tongue, then settled back and said, like always, in a high thin old man's tenor:

"Wonder what *it* is? Wonder if it's a he or a she or just a plain old *it?* Sometimes I wake up nights, twist on my corn-matting, think about that jar setting here in the long dark. Think about it hangin' in liquid, peaceful and pale like an animal oyster. Sometimes I wake Maw and we both think of it . . ."

While talking, Gramps moved his fingers in a quavering pantomime. Everybody watched his thick thumb weave, and the other heavy-nailed fingers undulate.

" . . . we both lay there, thinkin'. And we shivers. May be a hot night, trees sweatin', mosquitoes too hot to fly, but we shivers jest the same, and turn over, tryin' to sleep . . . "

Gramps lapsed back into silence, as if his speech was enough from him, let some other voice talk the wonder, awe and strangeness.

Juke Marmer, from Willows Road, wiped sweat off his palms on the round of his knees and softly said:

"I remember when I was a runnel-nosed gawk, we had a cat who was all the time makin' kittens. Lordamighty, she'd a litter ever time she turned around and skipped a fence—" Juke spoke in a kind of holy softness, benevolent. "Well, we usually gave the kittens away, but when this one particular litter busted out, everybody within walkin' distance had one-two our cats by gift, already.

"—So Ma busied on the back porch with a big gallon glass jar, filling it to the brim with water. It slopped in the sunlight. Ma said, 'Juke, you drown them kittens!' I 'member I stood there, the kittens mewed, running around, blind, small, helpless and snugly. Just beginning to get their eyes open. I looked at Ma, I said, 'Not *me* Ma! You do it!' But Ma turned pale and said it had to be done and I was the only one handy. And she went off to stir gravy and fix chicken. I—I picked up one—kitten. I held it. It was warm, it made a mewing sound. I felt like running away, not ever coming back."

Juke nodded his head now, eyes bright, young, seeing into the past, making it stark, chiseling it out with hammer and knife of words, smoothing it into horrible bas-relief with his tongue:

"I dropped the kitten into the water.

"He closed his eyes, opened his mouth, gasping for air. I remember how the little white fangs showed, the pink tongue came out, and bubbles with it, in a line, to the top of the water!

"I remember to this day the way that kitten floated after it was all over, drifting around, around, slow and not worrying, looking out at me, not condemnin' me for what I done. But not likin' me, either. Ahhhhh. . . . "

Hearts beat fast. Eyes shifted quickly from Juke to the shelved jar, back to him, up again, a spectators' game, as one sees at a tennis tournament, interest changing from moment to moment, apprehensively.

A pause.

Jahdoo, the black man from Swamp Crick Road, tossed his ivory eyeballs like a dusky juggler in his head. His dark knuckles knotted and flexed—grasshoppers alive.

"You know what thet is? You know, you *know?* That am thee center of Life, sure 'nuff! Lord believe me, it am so!"

. . .

Swaying in a tree-like rhythm, Jahdoo was blown by some swamp wind nobody could see, hear or feel, but himself. His eyeballs went around again, as if loosened from all mooring. His voice needled a dark thread pattern picking up each person by the lobes of their ears and sewing them into one unbreathing design:

"From that, lyin' back in the Middibamboo Sump, all sort o' thing crawl. It put out hand, it put out feet, it put out tongue an' horn an' it grow. Little bitty amoeba, perhap. Then a frog with a bulge-throat fit ta bust! Yah!" He cracked knuckles. "It slobber on up to its gummy joints and it—it AM A MAN! That am the center of creation. That am Middibamboo Mama, from which we all come ten thousand year ago. Believe it!"

"Ten thousand year ago!" reiterated Granny Carnation.

"It am old! Looky it! It donn worra no more. It know better. It hang like pork chop in fryin' fat. It got eye to see with, but it donn blink 'em, they donn look fretted, does they? No, man! It know betta. It know thet we done come from it, and we is going back TO it!"

"What color eyes has it got?"

"Grey."

"Naw, green!"

"What color hair? Brown?"

"Black!"

"Red!"

"No, grey!"

Then Charlie would give his drawling opinion. Some nights he'd say the same thing, some nights not. It didn't matter. When you said the same thing night after night in the deep summer, it always sounded different. The crickets changed it. The frogs changed it. The thing in the jar changed it. Charlie said:

"What if an old man went back into the swamp, or maybe a young child, and wandered around for years and years lost in the drippin' trails and gullies, the wet ravines, in the nights, skin a turnin' pale, and makin' cold and shrivelin' up. Bein' away from the sun he'd keep witherin' away up and up and finally sink into a muck-hole and lay in a kind of—solution, like the maggot mosquito sleepin' in liquid. Why, why—for all we know, this might be someone we know. Someone we passed words with once on a time. For all we know . . ."

A hissing from among the women folks back in the shadows. One woman standing, eyes shining black, fumbling for words. Her name was Mrs. Tridden. She said:

"Lots of little kids run stark naked into the swamp every year. They runs around and they never comes back. I almost got lost maself. I—I lost my little boy, Foley, that way. You—you DON'T SUPPOSE!!"

Breaths were taken in, snatched through nostrils, constricted, tightened. Mouths turned down at corners, bent by grim facial muscles. Heads turned on celery stalk necks, and eyes read her horror and hope. It was in Mrs. Tridden's body, wire-taut, holding onto the wall back of her with straight fingers stiff.

"My baby," she whispered. She breathed it out. "My baby. My Foley! Foley! Foley, is that you? Foley! Foley, tell me, baby, is that YOU!"

Everybody held their breath, turning to see the jar.

. . .

The thing in the jar said nothing. It just stared blind-white out upon the multitude. And deep in raw-boned bodies a secret fear juice ran like spring thaw, and the resolute ice of calm life and belief and easy humbleness was cracked down the middle by that juice and melted away in a gigantic torrent!

"It moved!" someone screamed.

"No, no, it didn't move. Just your eyes playin' tricks!"

"Hones' ta God," cried Juke. "I saw it shift slow like a dead kitten!"

"Hush up, now! It's been dead a long, long time. Maybe since before you was born!"

"He made a sign!" screamed Mrs. Tridden, the mother woman. "That's my baby, my Foley! My baby you got there! Three year old, he was! My baby lost and white in the swamp!"

The sobbing broke out of her, then.

"Now, now, there now, Mrs. Tridden. There now. Set down and stop shakin'. Ain't no more your child'n mine. There, there."

One of the women-folk held her and faded out the sobbing into jerked breathing and a fluttering of her lips in butterfly quickness as the breath stroked over them, afraid.

When all was quiet again, Granny Carnation, with a withered pink flower in her shoulder-length grey hair, sucked the pipe in her trap mouth and talked around it, shaking her head to make the hair dance in the light:

"All this talking and shoving around words. Hah. Like as not we'll never know what it is. Like as not if we could find out, we wouldn't want to know. It's like them magic tricks them magicians do at the show. Once you find the feke, it ain't no more funn' the innards of a jackbob. We come collecting around here every ten nights or so, talking, social like, with something, always something, to talk about. Stands to reason if we found out what the damn thing is there'd be nothing to talk about, so there!"

"Well, damn it to hell!" rumbled a bull voice. "I don't think it's nothin'!"

Tom Carmody.

Tom Carmody standing, as always, in shadow. Out on the porch, just his eyes staring in, his lips laughing at you dimly, mocking. His laughter got inside Charlie like a hornet sting. Thedy had put him up to it, Thedy was trying to undermine Charlie's social life, she was!

"Nothing," joked Carmody, harshly, "In that jar but a bunch of old jelly-fish from Sea Cove, a rottin' and a stinkin' fit to whelp!"

"You mightn't be jealous, Cousin Carmody?" asked Charlie slow.

"Haw!" snorted Carmody. "I jest come around ta watch you dumb nitwits jaw about nuthin'. I gits a kick out of it. You notice I never set foot inside or took part. I'm goin' home right now. Anybody wanna come along with me?"

He got no offer of company. He laughed again, as if this were a bigger joke, how so many people could be so dumb, and Thedy was raking her palms with angry nails back of the room. Charlie felt a twinge of unexpected fear at this.

Carmody, still laughing, rapped off the porch with his high-heeled boots and the sound of crickets took him away.

Granny Carnation gummed her pipe. "Like I was saying before the storm; that thing on the shelf, why couldn't it be sort of—all things? Lots of things. What they call a—gimmle——"

"Symbol?"

"That's it. Symbol. Symbol of all the nights and days in the dead canebrake. Why's it have to be one thing? Maybe it's lots."

And the talking went on for another hour, and Thedy slipped away into the night on the track of Tom Carmody, and Charlie began to sweat. They were up to something, those two. They were planning something. Charlie sweated warm all the rest of the evening. . . .

. . .

The meeting broke up late, and Charlie bedded down with mixed emotions. The meeting had gone off well, but what about Thedy and Tom Carmody?

Very late, with certain star coveys shuttled down the sky marking the time as late, Charlie heard the shushing of the tall grass parted by her penduluming hips. Her heels tacked soft across the porch.

She lay soundlessly in bed, cat eyes staring at him. He couldn't see them, but he could *feel* them staring.

"Charlie?"

He waited.

Then he said, "I'm awake."

Then she waited.

"Charlie?"

"What?"

"Bet you don't know where I been, bet you don't know where I been." It was a faint, derisive sing-song in the night.

He waited.

She waited again. She couldn't bear waiting long, though, and continued:

"I been to the carnival over in Cape City. Tom Carmody drove me. We—we talked to the carny-boss, Charlie, we did, we did, we *sure* did." And she sort of giggled to herself, secretly.

Charlie stirred upright on an elbow.

She said, "We found out what it is in your jar, Charlie—" insinuatingly.

Charlie flumped over, hands to ears. "I don't wanna hear."

"Oh, but you gotta hear, Charlie. It's a good joke. Oh, it's rare, Charlie," she hissed.

"Go—away," he said in a low firm voice.

"Unh-unh. No. No, sir, Charlie, Honey. Not until I tell. We talked to the carny-boss and he—he almost died laughin', he said he sold it to some—hick—for twelve bucks. And it ain't worth more than two dollars at most!"

Laughter bloomed in the dark, right out of her mouth, an awful kind of flower with her breath as its perfume.

She finished it, snapping, quick:

"It's just junk, Charlie! Liquid rubber, paper-mache, silk, cotton, chemicals! That's all! Got a metal-framework inside it! That's all! That's all it is, Charlie! That's all," she shrilled in triumph.

He sat up swiftly, ripping sheets apart in big fingers, roaring, tears coming bright on his cheeks:

"I don't wanna hear! Don't wanna hear!" he bellowed over and over.

She teased. "Wait'll everyone hears how fake it is! Won't they laugh! Won't they flap their lungs!"

He caught her wrists. "You ain't—gonna tell them?"

"Ouch, you hurt me!"

"You *ain't* gonna tell them."

"Wouldn't want me known as a liar, would you, Charles?"

He flung her wrist like white sticks into a well:

"Whyncha leave alone? You're dirty! Dirty jealous of everything I do. I took shine off your nose when I brung the jar home. You didn't sleep right until you ruined things!"

She laughed nastily. "Then I *won't* tell everybody," she said.

He caught on to her. "You spoiled *my* fun. That's all that counted. It don't matter if you tell the rest. *I* know. And I'll never have no more fun. You and that Tom Carmody. Him laughin'. I wish I could stop him from laughin'. He's been laughin' for years at me! Well, you just go tell the rest, the other people now—might as well have your fun—"

He strode angrily, grabbed the jar so it sloshed, and would have flung it on the floor, but he stopped, trembling, and let it down softly on the rickety table. He leaned over it, sobbing. If he lost this, the world was gone. And he was losing Thedy, too. Every month that passed she danced further away, sneering at him, funning him. For too many years her hips had been the pendulum by which he reckoned the time of his living. But other men, Tom Carmody, for one, were reckoning time from the same source.

Thedy was standing, waiting for him to smash the jar. Instead, he petted it thoughtfully. He thought of the long good evenings in the past month, those rich evenings of camaraderie, conversation woven into the fabric of the room. That, at least, was good, if nothing else.

He turned slowly to Thedy. She was lost forever to him.

"Thedy, you didn't go to the carnival."

"Yes, I did."

"You're lyin'!"

"No, I'm not."

"Thedy, this jar HAS to have somethin' in it. Somethin' besides the junk you say. Too many people believe there's somethin' in it, Thedy. You can't change that. The carny-man, if you talked with him, lied. Come here, Thedy."

"What you want?" she asked, sullenly.

"Come over here."

"Keep away from me, Charlie."

"I just want to show you something, Thedy." His voice was soft, low and insisting. "Here, kittie, kittie, kittie—HERE KITTIE!"

. . .

It was another night, about a week later. Gramps Medknowe and Granny Carnation came, followed by young Juke and Mrs. Tridden and Jahdoo, the colored man. Followed by all the others, young and old, creaking into chairs, each with his or her symbol, thought, hope, fear and wonder in mind. Each not looking at the shrine, but saying hello softly to Charlie.

They waited for the others to gather. From the shine of their eyes one could see that each saw something different in the jar, something of the life and the pale life after life, and the life in death and the death in life, each with his story, his cue, his lines, familiar, old but new.

Charlie sat alone.

"Hello, Charlie." A glance around, into the empty bedroom. "Where's your wife? Gone off again to visit her folks?"

"Yeah, she run off again to Tennessee. Be back in a couple weeks. She's the darndest one for running off. You know Thedy."

"Great one for ganntin' off, that woman."

Soft voices talking, getting settled, and then, quite suddenly, like a black leopard moving from the dark—Tom Carmody.

Tom Carmody standing outside the door, knees sagging and trembling, arms hanging and shaking at his side, staring into the room. Tom Carmody not daring to enter. Tom Carmody with his mouth open, but not smiling. His lips wet and slack, not smiling. His face pale as chalk, as if it had been kicked with a boot.

Gramps looked up at the jar, cleared his throat and said, "Why, I never noticed so definite before. It's got *blue* eyes."

"It always had blue eyes," said Jahdoo.

"No," whined Gramps. "No, it didn't. It was brown last time we was here." He blinked upward. "And anutther thing—it's got brown hair. Didn't have brown hair before."

"Yes, yes it did," sighed Mrs. Tridden.

"No, it didn't!"

"Yes, it did!"

Tom Carmody, shivering in the summer night, staring at the jar. Charlie, glancing up at it, rolling a cigarette, casually, at peace and calm, very certain of his life and world and thoughts. Tom Carmody, alone, seeing things about the jar he never saw before. *Everybody* seeing what they wanted to see; all thoughts running in a tide of quick rain:

"My baby! My little baby!" screamed the thought of Mrs. Tridden.

"A brain!" thought Gramps.

The colored man jigged his fingers. "Middibamboo Mama!"

A fisherman pursed his lips. "Jellyfish!"

"Kitten! Here kittie, kittie, kittie!" the thoughts drowned clawing in Juke's skull. "Kitten!"

"Everything and anything!" shrilled Granny's weazened thought. "The night, the swamp, the death, the pallid moist things of the sea!"

Silence, and then Gramps said, "I wonder. I wonder. Wonder if it's a he—or a she—or just a plain old *it*?"

Charlie glanced up, satisfied, tamping his cigarette, shaping it to his mouth. Then he looked at Tom Carmody, who would never smile again, in the door. "I reckon we'll never know. Yeah, I reckon we won't." Charlie smiled.

It was just one of those things they keep in a jar in the tent of a sideshow on the outskirts of a little drowsy town. One of those pale things drifting in plasma, forever dreaming, circling, with its peeled, dead eyes staring out at you and never seeing you. . . .

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGICAL CATALOG (1943–1944)

The complete chronological catalog, maintained in the archives of the Center for Ray Bradbury Studies, establishes the sequence and dates of composition for all known Bradbury stories up through 1950. There are entries for all published stories, for unpublished stories with verified surviving typescripts, and unpublished stories where no typescript has been located but composition has been verified from secondary sources. Bradbury's thousands of pages of incomplete story openings and fragments, surviving today in the Albright Collection, are rarely datable with precision and are not included in the catalog structure.

Volume 1 of the *Collected Stories* contains the catalog entries from 1935 (the date of Bradbury's earliest surviving high school stories) to April 1943 (the composition date for "The Small Assassin," the first volume's final selection). The following entries extend the record of Bradbury's known story compositions through the next twelve months of his career, a very productive time during which he composed the twenty-six stories included in volume 2. For purposes of continuity between volumes, volume 2's catalog includes all of 1943 and 1944. Appendix B describes the unpublished stories composed during 1944 (descriptions of the unpublished stories composed through 1943 appear in volume 1).

The chronological catalog is designed to contrast the publishing record of these years with the broader development of his creativity as a short story writer. The left column contains the continuous publication history of Bradbury's short fiction, as established in Eller, "The Stories of Ray Bradbury: An Annotated Finding List 1938–1991" (*Bulletin of Bibliography* 49.1 [March 1992]: 27–51) and as revised and expanded for Eller and Touponce, *Ray Bradbury: The Life of Fiction* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2004) 439–503. This publication history represents the timeline by which scholars and critics have always studied Bradbury's prolific output of short fiction as it has developed over his seven decades as a published author.

The right column presents a chronological catalog or calendar of Bradbury's short fiction, which reveals (as far as possible) the dates and true order of composition for both his published and unpublished stories. The catalog also serves

as the structural foundation for all volumes in this chronological edition of Bradbury's short stories.

In establishing the chronological catalog, I relied on fourteen years of personal interviews with Bradbury, my continuing study of his personal papers, and a detailed study of his incoming correspondence as preserved in his home and in the collection of Bradbury's principal bibliographer, Professor Donn Albright of the Pratt Institute. I have also studied the record of his outgoing correspondence as it has been preserved in various university collections around the country. Bradbury's 1942 to 1945 composition and submission log, his 1941 to 1949 sales record, and his two sales-by-publisher indexes are somewhat fragmentary and cryptic in places, but these represent the principal sources of documentation for the chronology. The final primary source of information is a more recent discovery; in October 2010 I located Bradbury's index card file of submissions covering the period from 1941 through 1975. These include a more extensive record of magazine submissions (and rejections) than any of the other primary source documents.

There is one significant secondary source as well. Bradbury's record of sales negotiated by his first New York agent, Julius Schwartz, was prepared and annotated by author and close Bradbury friend William F. Nolan. His access to Schwartz, Bradbury, and other bibliographical sources dates from the early 1950s; in spite of its secondary status, Nolan's list may represent the most accurate source for actual sales dates and payment records. All of the primary and secondary source documents used in establishing the chronological catalog are preserved in the Albright Collection; photocopies of these sources are deposited in the Center for Ray Bradbury Studies, Institute for American Thought, Indiana University School of Liberal Arts.

I have established the chronology for Bradbury's stories by working backward from the publication date to find (a) the date of sale, (b) the date a story was received or first circulated by his agents, and in some cases (c) Bradbury's own annotated date of initial composition. I discovered many of these benchmark dates in letters from Schwartz, who handled nearly all of Bradbury's pulp sales until 1947, and in the letters of Don Congdon, who became Bradbury's agent in September 1947. Bradbury's own letters to these men and to some of his editors also provide documentation, as do Bradbury's occasional annotations on his typescript carbons. Bradbury's introductions to his more recent story collections, his unpublished notes and contents listings, his published articles and interviews, and my own series of interviews have filled in many gaps in the record.

In the chronological edition, all of the dating documentation for Bradbury's published stories is provided in the individual story head notes, located in the volume's apparatus section. Entries in both columns of the Chronological Catalog begin with the standard bibliographic reference for the published stories,

which indicates year of publication and the sequence within that year; thus, 44-1 identifies "The Sea Shell" as the first story published by Bradbury in 1944. In the left column, seasonal (quarterly) publications precede monthly publications of the same season; monthly publications precede those published by date within the month. The titles of published stories appear in boldface type for ease of analysis. In the right column, these same bibliographical identifiers will serve to illustrate just how radically the public record of publication gives way to the actual chronology of composition. The bibliographical numbers show that eleven of the published stories written during the volume period were first published later—sometimes years and decades later. Unpublished stories in the compositional sequence, which have no identifier prefixes, are marked by an em dash (—) and are easily spotted. Where a story is better known by a variant title (vt), that variant is given parenthetically (in square brackets []) to aid reader recognition of Bradbury's most significant and popular tales. Subsequent volumes will continue the chronology with similar tables that can be connected to study the larger timeline of Bradbury's early career.

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Publication Sequence		Compositional Sequence	
-1943-			
		44-6	**"Morgue Ship."** Jan. 2, 1943. First published *Planet Stories,* Summer 1944.
		47-4	**"Tomorrow and Tomorrow."** Jan. 9, 1943. First published *Fantastic Adventures,* May 1947.
		44-3	**"The Monster Maker."** Jan. 14, 1943. First published *Planet Stories,* Spring 1944.
		43-11	**"King of the Gray Spaces" ("R Is for Rocket").** Jan. 24, 1943. First published *Famous Fantastic Mysteries,* Dec. 1943.
43-1	**"The Piper"** *Thrilling Wonder Stories,* Feb. 1943.	43-6	**"The Scythe."** Feb. 18, 1943. First published *Weird Tales,* Jul. 1943.
		44-4	**"I, Rocket."** Feb. 22, 1943. First published *Amazing Stories,* May 1944.

Publication Sequence	Compositional Sequence
43-2 **"The Wind"** (first version). *Weird Tales,* Mar. 1943.	— "Application to Ceos" (unpublished). Mar. 5, 1943. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection.
43-3 **"Gabriel's Horn"** (with Henry Hasse). *Captain Future,* Spring 1943.	— "Remember Helen Charles" (unpublished). Begun 1942; complete draft Mar. 11, 1943.
	44-17 **"Undersea Guardians."** Mar. 15, 1943. First published *Amazing Stories,* Dec. 1944.
43-4 **"Subterfuge"** *Astonishing Stories,* Apr. 1943.	46-17 **"The Small Assassin."** Apr. 16, 1943. First published *Dime Mystery,* Nov. 1946.
	— "Bombing Moon" (unpublished and unlocated). Apr. 23, 1943.
	44-1 **"The Sea Shell."** April 27, 1943. First published *Weird Tales,* Jan. 1944.
	43-7 **"Doodad."** April 29, 1943. Original title: "Everything Instead of Something." First published *Astounding Science Fiction,* Sept. 1943.
43-5 **"The Crowd"** *Weird Tales,* May 1943.	43-10 **"The Ducker."** May 5, 1943. First published *Weird Tales,* Nov. 1943.
	48-2 **"The Shape of Things."** May 24–June 25, 1943. First published *Thrilling Wonder Stories,* Feb. 1948.
	— "The Idol" (unpublished). May 24–June 27, 1943. Possibly started 1942; to Julius Schwartz, Mar. 10, 1943, as "The Idol of Aku."

Publication Sequence

43-6 **"The Scythe"** *Weird Tales,* July 1943.

Compositional Sequence

46-12 **"The Night."** May 31, 1943. First published *Weird Tales,* July 1946.

48-20 **"Perchance to Dream." ("Asleep in Armageddon").** ca. June 1943. Started Apr. 8, 1942. First published *Planet Stories,* Winter 1948.

48-15 **"Referent."** June 9, 1943. First published (as by Brett Sterling) *Thrilling Wonder Stories,* Oct. 1948.

48-5 **"Jonah of the Jove-Run."** June 17, 1943. Original title: "All Down the Line." First published *Planet Stories,* Spring 1948.

47-7 **"The Emissary."** June 23, 1943. First published *Dark Carnival,* [Apr.] 1947.

43-8 **"And Watch the Fountains."** ca. July 1943. First published *Astounding Science Fiction,* Sept. 1943.

46-10 **"The Million Year Picnic."** July 9, 1943. Original title: "Family Outing." First published *Planet Stories,* Summer 1946.

— "Minority Problem" (unpublished). Started 1942; complete draft July 24, 1943. With Julius Schwartz cover page.

47-2 **"The Man Upstairs."** July 24, 1943. First published *Harper's,* Mar. 1947.

44-2 **"Reunion."** Aug. 5, 1943. First published *Weird Tales,* Mar. 1944.

Publication Sequence		Compositional Sequence	
		—	"Whose Little Corpse Are You?" (unpublished). Aug. 31, 1943. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection.
43-7	**"Doodad"** *Astounding Science Fiction,* Sept. 1943	—	"The Things" (unpublished). Sept. 20, 1943. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection. Rejected by John Campbell (*Astounding Science-Fiction*), Oct. 6, 1943.
43-8	**"And Watch the Fountains"** *Astounding Science Fiction,* Sept. 1943.	44-8	**"Killer, Come Back to Me!"** Sept. 22, 1943. First published *Detective Tales,* July 1944.
		—	"Juju Bones" (unpublished). Sept. 22, 1943. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Rejected by Rogers Terrill (*Argosy*), early Oct. 1943.
43-9	**"Promotion to Satellite"** *Thrilling Wonder Stories,* Fall 1943.	—	"Cycle" (unpublished). Oct. 5, 1943 (variant title: "Harvest").
		—	"The Mesa" (unpublished). Oct. 18, 1943. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection.
43-10	**"The Ducker"** *Weird Tales,* Nov. 1943.	44-9	**"The Long Night."** Oct. 27, 1943. First published *New Detective,* July 1944.
		44-19	**"Lazarus Come Forth."** Nov. 9, 1943. First published *Planet Stories,* Winter 1944.
		—	"No Hiding Place" (unpublished). Nov. 11, 1943. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection. Rejected by *Astounding,* Dec. 1943.

Publication Sequence		Compositional Sequence	
		44-7	**"There Was an Old Woman."** Nov. 21, 1943. First published *Weird Tales,* July 1944.
43-11	**"King of the Gray Spaces"** *Famous Fantastic Mysteries,* Dec. 1943.	—	"That's Me—Third From the Left" (unpublished). Dec. 4, 1943. Written for the "Probability Zero" column of *Astounding Science Fiction.*
		44-11	**"The Trunk Lady."** Dec. 15, 1943. First published *Detective Tales,* Sept. 1944.
		—	"Death in Venice" (unpublished and unlocated). Dec. 25, 1943. Single-page fragment in the Albright Collection.
		—	["Crime Story"] (unpublished; title on file folder). ca. 1943
		—	"The Windowpane and the Leaflet" (unpublished). ca. 1943.
-1944-			
44-1	**"The Sea Shell"** *Weird Tales,* Jan. 1944.	47-9	**"Jack-in-the-Box."** Jan. 1944. First published *Dark Carnival,* [Apr.] 1947.
		09–19	**"Where Everything Ends."** Jan. 1944. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection. First published *Where Everything Ends* (Bradbury crime fiction omnibus, 2009).
		44-12	**"Bang! You're Dead!"** Feb. 1944. First published *Weird Tales,* Sept. 1944.
		—	"The Douser" (three unpublished and incomplete story fragments). Feb. 1944.

Publication Sequence		Compositional Sequence	
		44-14	**"Half-Pint Homicide."** Feb. 1944. Original title: "Enter—The Douser." First published *Detective Tales,* Nov. 1944.
		46-4	**"Rocket Skin."** Feb. 1944. Rewritten May 1944. First published *Thrilling Wonder Stories,* Spring 1946.
44-2	**"Reunion"** *Weird Tales,* Mar. 1944.	44-16	**"It Burns Me Up!"** Mar. 5, 1944. Original title: "Forgotten Man." First published *Dime Mystery,* Nov. 1944.
		44-15	**"The Jar."** Mar. 7, 1944. First published *Weird Tales,* Nov. 1944.
		44-10	**"Yesterday I Lived!"** Mar. 15, 1944. First published *Flynn's Detective Fiction,* Aug. 1944.
		—	"These Are the Good Days" (unpublished and unknown). Mar. 27, 1944.
44-3	**"The Monster Maker"** *Planet Stories,* Spring 1944.	—	"Dress for Janie" (unpublished and unlocated). Apr. 5, 1944. Circulated by Ed Boden, 1944.
		09-5	**"If Paths Must Cross Again."** Apr. 5, 1944. Expanded Dec. 7, 1944. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection. First published in *We'll Always Have Paris* (NY: Morrow, 2009).
		46-5	**"The Miracles of Jamie."** Apr. 7, 1944. First published *Charm* Apr. 1946.
		—	"The Extra Words" (unpublished and unlocated). Apr. 19, 1944. Returned by *The Saint* Mar. 1945; to *Saint's Choice,*

Publication Sequence		Compositional Sequence	
			Feb. 5, 1946; to Fiction House syndicate (Paul Payne) Mar. 27, 1947.
		—	"Room of the World." Apr. 26, 1944. Rejected by *Yale Review.* Two-page fragment is in the Albright Collection.
44-4	**"I, Rocket."** *Amazing Stories,* May 1944.	45-12	**"The Long Way Home."** May 2, 1944. First published *Dime Mystery* Nov. 1945. Original title: "The Long Way Around."
44-5	**"The Lake."** *Weird Tales,* May 1944.	44-18	**"Four-Way Funeral."** May 8, 1944. First published *Detective Tales,* Dec. 1944.
		—	"To Remember Is to Forget" (unpublished and unlocated). May 10, 1944. Single-page fragment, dated May 5, 1944, is in the Albright Collection.
		05-7	**"The Reincarnate."** June 3, 1944. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection. First published in *Dark Delicacies* (NY: Carroll & Graff, 2005).
		—	"A Noise Like Love" (unpublished). June 14, 1944.
		—	"Long Live the Douser!" (unpublished). June 23, 1944. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection.
44-6	**"Morgue Ship."** *Planet Stories,* Summer 1944.	04-7	**"Chrysalis"** (distinct from 46-11). June 1944. TS, 15 pp. First published in *The Cat's Pajamas* (NY: Morrow, 2004).
44-7	**"There Was an Old Woman."** *Weird Tales,* July 1944.	—	"The Boss" (unpublished). ca. Jul. 1944 (vt: "Top Man").
44-8	**"Killer, Come Back to Me!"** *Detective Tales,* July 1944.		

Publication Sequence		Compositional Sequence	
44-9	**"The Long Night."** *New Detective,* July 1944.	45-1	**"The Poems."** July 10, 1944. First published *Weird Tales,* Jan. 1945.
44-10	**"Yesterday I Lived!"** *Flynn's Detective Fiction,* Aug. 1944.	46-3	**"Defense Mech."** July 19, 1944. First published *Planet Stories,* Spring 1946.
		45-3	**"Hell's Half-Hour."** Aug. 5, 1944. First published *New Detective,* Mar. 1945. Original title: "Mr. Priory Meets Mr. Caldwell."
		45-2	**"'I'm Not So Dumb!'"** Aug. 8, 1944. First published *Detective Tales,* Feb. 1945.
44-11	**"The Trunk Lady."** *Detective Tales,* Sept. 1944.	45-13	**"Invisible Boy."** Aug. 11–Sep. 14, 1944. First published *Mademoiselle,* Nov. 1945.
44-12	**"Bang! You're Dead!"** *Weird Tales,* Sept. 1944.	—	"Solution From a Bottle" (unpublished). Aug. 19, 1944. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection.
		50-1	**"I'll Not Ask for Wine"** (**"Ylla"**). Fall 1944. First published *Maclean's* (Canada), Jan. 1, 1950.
44-13	**"And Then—The Silence."** *Super Science Stories* (Canada), Oct. 1944.	45-4	**"The Tombstone."** Oct. 13, 1944. First published *Weird Tales,* Mar. 1945.
		45-6	**"The Watchers."** Oct. 13, 1944. First published *Weird Tales,* May 1945.
		45-8	**"Corpse-Carnival"** [as by D. R. Banat]. Oct. 27, 1944. First published *Dime Mystery,* July 1945. Original title: "One Minus One."

Publication Sequence		Compositional Sequence	
		—	"The Lady Up Ahead" (unpublished). Oct. 27, 1944. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection.
		46-9	**"Lorelei of the Red Mist"** (with Leigh Brackett). Sept.–Oct. 1944. First published *Planet Stories,* Summer 1946.
44-14	**"Half-Pint Homicide."** *Detective Tales,* Nov. 1944.		
44-15	**"The Jar."** *Weird Tales,* Nov. 1944.	45-7	**"Dead Men Rise Up Never."** Nov. 6, 1944. First published *Dime Mystery,* July 1945. Original title: "The Sea Cure."
44-16	**"It Burns Me Up!"** *Dime Mystery,* Nov. 1944.		
		45-11	**"Skeleton"** (distinct from 45-5). Nov. 30, 1944. First published *Weird Tales,* Sept. 1945.
44-17	**"Undersea Guardians."** *Amazing Stories,* Dec. 1944.	—	"The Gull" (unpublished). ca. Dec. 1944; sent to Don Congdon, Nov. 9, 1947.
44-18	**"Four-Way Funeral."** *Detective Tales,* Dec. 1944.	—	"One in the Dark" (unpublished). 1944.
		—	"Appointment for Dinner" [as by D. R. Banat] (unpublished). ca. 1944. With Julius Schwartz cover page. Original lost; photocopy in the Albright Collection.
44-19	**"Lazarus Come Forth."** *Planet Stories,* Winter 1944.		

APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF BRADBURY'S UNPUBLISHED FICTION

1944

"A Noise Like Love." June 14, 1944. 1,000 words. Humorous short-short story.

"Joe always did what the script said to do:" Joe Kenyon's wide range of bone-bruising sound effects are impressive, yet even his best self-inflicted sounds of mayhem and bodily harm can't bring quality to the mediocre radio soap opera scripts of *Edmund and Julia*. But Joe has a far more pressing problem; his romance with the show's director, Allie Williams, is foundering, and all because he was too fearful of being fired to evade an impetuous kiss from the sponsor's willful daughter Gwen. Now Allie won't speak to him, and all seems lost until Joe realizes that he can script his own remarkable sound effects to save his love life. He stages an imaginary rebuff of Gwen in the Radio City stairwell, and queues his one-man act just as Allie passes within earshot. Joe tells the imaginary Gwen that he's in love with Allie, and sends her packing with a threat to tell Gwen's father of her unwanted advances, regardless of the consequences to his future on the show. The accompanying sound effects sell the encounter to Allie, but these effects are too good—Joe ends up falling down a flight of stairs. The ensuing love-banter between Allie and the injured Joe is couched in humorous radio metaphors, ending with Allie's request for a kiss: "So make a noise, Joe. Make a noise like—love."

Dating for this story is based on a specific entry in the author's composition and submission log. The often unbridled and unsophisticated humor of Bradbury's amateur fanzine stories had been inspired by the radio shows that he had loved even before his family moved to Los Angeles in 1934. There, during his high school years, he managed to attend many of the great radio comedy and variety shows broadcast live from the emerging West Coast network infrastructures of the mid- and late 1930s. He was a keen observer of these radio performances, and saw firsthand how sound effects were created and blended into the scripts he often rescued from studio garbage bins and closely studied.

"A Noise Like Love" offered a prose-homage to the sound effects people and circulated for a time under a Julius Schwartz agency cover page. On June 20, 1944, Schwartz relayed his initial plans: "The short-short you sent was kinda cute and I'll try it with *Argosy*." The venerable *Argosy* magazine accepted a wide range of fiction and it was now owned by Popular Publications, where Bradbury was already well established with his crime fiction and some of his early science fiction and fantasy pieces. Unfortunately, "kinda cute" wouldn't carry the day at *Argosy;* on August 20 Schwartz paraphrased the verdict ("not important enough—too slight") and sent it on to *This Week* magazine, where it also failed to sell. By its nature "A Noise Like Love" was a hard-to-place piece that might have had more success as a broadcast short; it never sold and was returned to Bradbury along with other unsold stories.

"Long Live the Douser!" June 23, 1944. 3,300 words. Humorous crime story.

"Douser" Mulligan's approach to cracking crime cases was wildly unorthodox, but amazingly effective. He could follow the unseen trail to a perpetrator like a divvy dousing for underground water, and then infuriate them with antic behavior and verbal abuse until the criminal, nearly insane with anger, incriminates himself. But now the Douser is laid out in a casket, and his apparent murder draws dozens of Los Angeles crime bosses and their gangs to the funeral service. They come to celebrate, but soon mysterious verbal insults, emanating from unseen sources, lead to a full-blown mob war and shootings within the close confines of the funeral chapel. The police clear the pews and take the survivors into custody, where the gangsters settle old scores by giving evidence against each other in many unsolved crimes. Unseen tape recorders placed throughout the chapel add to the evidence, and it turns out that hidden microphones triggered much of the violent behavior. But who planted these devices? The mayor of Los Angeles, remaining behind at the chapel to survey the scene of the biggest criminal roundup in the history of the city, wants to know; in response, the funeral home director leads the mayor to the Douser's casket. To the mayor's astonishment, the director rouses the Douser from his feigned death-sleep. Completely exhausted from his full day's "work," the Douser smiles with contentment, rolls over in his casket, and goes back to sleep.

A thirteen-page fair copy typescript with a Julius Schwartz agency cover page was returned to Bradbury in 1947, along with a number of other unsold stories that Schwartz had circulated without success. The notebook holding all of these typescripts has since disappeared, but not before Donn Albright, Bradbury's long-time bibliographer, and writer William F. Nolan examined the notebook; fortunately, Albright made a photocopy of "Long Live the Douser!"

and the other returned stories in the late 1970s. The June 1944 completion date originates from an entry for this yarn in Bradbury's composition and submission log; his deep-stroke holograph cancellation of the entry is similar to his canceled entries for other stories from the late spring and early summer of 1944 (such as the unpublished "To Remember Is to Forget" and the long-deferred "The Reincarnate") that were quickly withdrawn from circulation. His first two Douser stories, "Half-Pint Homicide" (selection 23) and "Four-Way Funeral" (volume 3), would appear in the November and December 1944 issues of *Detective Tales*. Julius Schwartz found "Long Live the Douser!" to be little more than an extended anecdote and offered his preliminary assessment on July 4, 1944: "Idea was fair—but the ending was too easy to figure out. Too much talk, talk, talk." The dialog had the odd humor and specialized criminal cant of a Damon Runyon story, but there was no characterization or story line. On September 2, 1944, Schwartz relayed Mike Tilden's similar assessment: "I'm a little afraid of the possible sacrilegious angle. Also, it strikes me as a pretty obvious gag and not cleverly enough handled—the rather juvenile name-calling, etc." This turn in the Douser Mulligan sequence of stories was almost inevitable; Douser was simply a carnivalized version of the Raymond Chandler detective, and could not sustain the series of humorous yarns that Bradbury was beginning to spin around him. Two more fragments of incomplete stories survive in the Albright Collection, but Bradbury probably never finished them after "Long Live the Douser!" failed to reach print.

"The Boss." ca. March 1944. 4,000 words. Crime story.

"Nobody likes me." Gregory Mark, a West Coast crime boss who murdered his way to the top in the 1940s wartime world of counterfeiting and black marketeering, has suffered a psychological breakdown. His girlfriend has left him, and Marks now realizes that his formidable power to persuade and coerce cannot give him what he wants most in life: people to like and respect him. His three closest minions, Chi-Chi the bodyguard, Sugar the master counterfeiter, and the black-market tough Big Sam, work desperately to bring the Boss out of his listless state before rival kingpin Manuel Ferrere takes over his territory. After a close encounter with Ferrere, the boys get Mark to a psychiatrist, who soon realizes that Mark will never recover until he makes the leap from the shadow world of criminal power into a power role that is acceptable in society.

The analyst is quick to point out that Marks does not have to leave his past entirely behind, for there's nothing wrong with self-aggrandizement as a way to win respect and friendship: "Criminals, unable to cope with normal human problems, build their own little replica, their own little society, and praise and respect and build one another up with their own limited standards. In the criminal society a man is respected if he can shoot straight, counterfeit, kill,

cheat, rob, steal. His sense of values, you see, is different, but the motivation remains the same—self-aggrandizement, building up one's ego. Gangsters simply take the wrong means to a certain end. But in the end they . . . gain nothing but the opposite of what they are seeking. Death instead of life. Hate instead of love. Intolerance instead of respect."

Mark comes out of his passive state, and weighs his options as Chi-Chi, Sugar, and Big Sam hail a cab and take him to confront Ferrare: he can terminate his association with the boys (or terminate *them*), or he can bring them along into his new way of life. The confrontation with Ferrere is fragmented and incomplete, but it appears that Marks takes him down as the first step in his new role as a private detective—a venture that requires exactly three partners. For the first time in his life, a policeman appreciates his work: "You hear that, Chi-Chi? You hear that, Sugar? You hear that, Big Sam? The guy likes me! God Allmighty, he LIKES me!"

A fifteen-page typescript survives in the Albright Collection, along with eleven pages of partially complete bridging text. The final episode is fragmented; Bradbury's holograph revisions and cuts do not address all of the uncorrected errors and missing words, suggesting that this is a preliminary draft for a story that may not have been brought to a fair-copy state. Bradbury's initial insight and story premise appears (inverted) at the bottom of page 14: "the proper kind of self-aggrandizement can bring happiness, the improper kind—tragedy." The opening of an unfinished outline ("scene one: Mark faces a problem") follows; this sheet was later turned 180 degrees and paginated to continue the story narrative.

Bradbury's revised premise appears on a separate sheet, free of any other text: "The BOSS wants to be respected, looked up to: HOW does he make people do it? By changing his life, and being honest. PREMISE: Taking the right means to the right end will secure happiness." In both forms this premise, as well as the psychiatrist's analysis of Mark's case in the story narrative, reflects elements of the books on psychology that he read during the early 1940s, but the distracting elements of gangland humor, culled from more than a few films of the day, prevent the development of a compelling prose narrative. There is no entry for this story in any of Bradbury's detailed composition and submission records, and it is unlikely that it was ever sent on to Julius Schwartz for circulation.

"Solution from a Bottle." August 19, 1944. 3,200 words. Humorous crime story.

Mr. Thompson is drunk, and in charge of a Smith & Wesson revolver he's just stolen from a storefront window display. He just wants to scare Mr. Porter, who is having an affair with Thompson's wife. The story unfolds through an interior monolog, his own private drunken reverie; but his staggering journey home does

not go unnoticed. Two hit men are also tracking Porter, who is blackmailing the owner of the Caraccas Club, a Manhattan nightspot up in the sixties. Thompson staggers into them near his brownstone apartment building, and they recognize him. The two men help him up to his apartment; when Porter answers, they kill him with Thompson's stolen revolver and run off. After a brief confrontation with Lita, his estranged wife, Thompson runs off before the police arrive. He's now sober enough to realize his deadly dilemma: "How'm I going to solve this murder if I don't remember what the murders looked like?"

Scotch and rum are his only allies, and he stops by his neighborhood liquor store: "Another drink to brace the memory, to go deeper into the pickled subconscious?" Renewed in this way, he heads for Porter's favorite club on 56th Street, where a few dollars buys him information about Porter's blackmail threat against Mr. Allen, manager of the Caraccas Club farther uptown. A cab ride to the Caraccas Club leads him to a face that looks vaguely familiar. Suddenly, Thompson's scotch-soaked subconscious comes through again: "Over there is a man leaning against a pillar, watching the floor show. Another drink for me. He begins to change. Like one of those movie transitions where Jekyll becomes Hyde. I dilute him with liquor. One part him, three parts scotch. It seeps down into my subconscious. I wash away the strange unknown look of him, bringing out, like a developing picture slowly, the other HIM!"

But Thompson can't play his hand, and ends up in a car with the two hitmen, under orders from Allen: "This is the way I want it to look in tomorrow morning's papers. Man kills wife's lover, then commits suicide off of bridge, very drunk." Thompson sobers up a bit, pretends to pass out, then jumps his captors. Will Thompson succeed? Only with help from the usual source: "I need another drink, now." Then he *really* passes out. When he wakens, the men are nowhere to be found; he drives their car back to his apartment building, where the police are waiting for him. Noises from the trunk lead Thompson and the police to the hit men, who are near suffocation. His final drunken inspiration apparently provided the only way to make these toughs talk—Thompson makes them confess before he opens the trunk.

"Solution from a Bottle" survives only through a late 1970s photocopy in the Albright Collection; the original fourteen-page typescript, with a Julius Schwartz agency cover, was lost along with a notebook of other unsold stories returned to Bradbury by Schwartz in 1947. Bradbury's composition and submission log contains a completion date of August 19, 1944, which places this experimental first-person drunken narrative in the midst of other experiments in subjective point of view: self-hypnosis ("Defense Mech," July 19), two blind men trying to kill each other ("Hell's Half-Hour," August 5), and a weak-minded man who outwits a murder frame-up ("I'm Not So Dumb!," August 8). "Solution from a Bottle" re-

visits Bradbury's long-standing interest in alcoholic behaviors and motivations, as well as his fascination with sensations of distorted sight and sound.

But there is also a reversion to the comic radio routines and Marx Brothers word play that he had tried to emulate as a teenager: "Got to stay sober for my fight with the arch-criminals. After which they will be fallen arches. After which joke I apologize to all the passing fire hydrants." The basic idea had potential—alcoholic stimulation of the creative subconscious proved to be a fatal attraction for many modern writers. Unfortunately, "Solution from a Bottle" becomes more of a drunken homage to Popeye, whose solutions to conflict emerge in a similar way from a can of spinach. Even with his newfound success in the crime field, there is no record of interest from any of the detective pulp editors for this story. Its creation becomes even more remarkable against the backdrop of his writing chronology. As he indulged himself in such dead-end humor, he was also composing such enduring major-market magazine stories as "Invisible Boy" and "Ylla," destined to become the first chapter of *The Martian Chronicles.*

"The Lady Up Ahead." October 27, 1944. 2,100 words. A mystery tale.

Mr. Carlson is a staid, middle-aged insurance salesman who takes the same train, at the same time, every day to the village where he lives outside the city. His routine never varies; he has no use for, or interest in, other people on the train, preferring to bury his nose and his attention in the financial section of his paper until he reaches his stop.

One day, though, he notices a lovely woman in the next car, whom he can see through the glass windows in the doors that separate them. He becomes interested in her, not only on account of her appearance but because her changing facial expressions and hand gestures indicate an intriguing personal narrative. Joined by Mr. Bailey, a younger coworker, the two men chat about Carlson's speculations and eventually make a bet; Bailey is sure she's in love, but Carlson disagrees. He argues that it's impossible to tell what someone is thinking, just from how they look; people often dissemble. Carlson concludes that the only way to know for sure is to ask her, which he promises to do. He will report the results to Bailey and they'll settle their bet the next day.

The woman gets off the train at Carlson's village stop. He rushes against a tide of other passengers to follow her, eventually catching up with her just as she enters a quiet, country lane. They walk and talk together and Carlson tells her about his bet. She indicates that her thoughts were of a place, not a romance. The place, she tells him, is just ahead; would he like to see it? Of course he would. But he is disappointed; it seems to be nothing more than a flat spot beside a creek. She tells him that it is a large quicksand bog; and that the very

night before, on the exact, same spot, she had been accompanied by another man. He had kissed her—and then she'd pushed him in and watched him be sucked down. Mr. Carlson is stunned, speechless.

The next day, Mr. Bailey waits on the train for Mr. Carlson, who never appears. But the mysterious woman does, and as the train pulls out, Mr. Bailey watches her begin to repeat her pantomime of expressions and emotions.

The nine-page typescript is fair-copy and continuous, consisting of nine numbered pages and a Julius Schwartz agency cover sheet. The typescript is undated, but a dated entry appears in Bradbury's composition and submission log. Two published stories have parallels to "The Lady Up Ahead." A man who decides to leave his train in "The Town Where No One Got Off" (1958) has a chance encounter that nearly leads to his death, but without the romantic angle. "Drink Entire: Against the Madness of Crowds" (1976), involving two coworkers and a mysterious lady, centers on benign witchcraft rather than murder.

"The Gull." ca. December 1944. 1,300 words. A romance.

A California couple drives down to Ensenada on the coast of Mexico for their honeymoon. On the second day, they emerge from a swim in the warm sunlit water and the woman finds a gull with a broken wing on the beach. It is quivering and "making faint miserable sounds in its throat." She goes to the car for a chocolate bar, breaks it into bits and offers it to the gull. She tries talking to it, coaxing it to eat, and tries to pet it. But the gull backs away, flapping and hissing. The husband also tries to help. He finds a dead fish and presents it to the gull, talking soothingly to it. But the gull will not touch the fish.

The weather begins to change; the day is ending and becoming misty and cool. The gull will not let them help it, and there's nothing more they can do. They have to leave. The wife worries that the gull won't eat, and asks her husband what to do. He says, "Nothing. He won't let us pick him up." The wife doesn't want to leave the gull, but the husband tells her that it's late and they have to go. On the way back to town he reassures her that the bird will be all right. In fact, he's sure it's eating at that very moment.

In their hotel room she lies on the bed, still wondering and worrying aloud about the bird. The husband decides that what they need to do is to shower, have a good meal, and go out on the town. He's able to raise her spirit enough that she agrees. But suddenly she turns to him, holding him close and kissing him again and again. "Close," she whispered . . . "Oh, please, *please,* hold me close!" They hold each other tightly.

The five-page numbered typescript bears Bradbury's cover sheet but no date. The folder also includes a slightly variant second typescript as well as another opening page variant fragment. Dating is based on Bradbury's first visit to Ensenada, Mexico, during a 1944 automobile trip with his friend Grant Beach.

"One in the Dark." ca. 1944. 3,700 words. Crime story.

"The acid was flung straight into Henry Leopold's wild and frightened eyes. . . ." An unknown assailant had ended the career of a big-time crime boss in a matter of seconds. The blindness was total, and permanent. Leopold slipped into deep depression, realizing that "death would be only transferring from one dark to another, almost a trifling movement." Eventually he refocuses himself on revenge and a relentless climb back to the top of the crime world. His other senses compensate for the loss of vision, and he still has great physical strength. Leopold forces his old gang members to see his renewed potential; each one (Chi-Chi, Maeterlinck, and Louie) is impressed, and a little frightened, by his ability to fistfight and even aim his revolver through his blindness.

Leopold is confronted in his office by arch rival "Georgia" Frank. Frank pulls his gun and is about to shoot Henry when, taking advantage of his rival's overconfidence, Leopold knocks "Georgia" unconscious with a blow of his cane. They roll the unconscious Frank down the stairs and into the street, where a brief gunfight with the rival gang follows; a car pulls up, the unidentified gunmen get in, and the car roars off. Leopold celebrates with his men in a familiar saloon, but they are drugged and he alone is taken at gunpoint by one of "Georgia" Frank's men.

A short car ride ends up in a meeting with a woman who smells nice, walks lightly, and who wears expensive clothing. Is this the real Georgia Frank? Or perhaps the mysterious assailant who blinded him in the first place? They banter a bit until Henry Leopold concludes that she's offering a partnership that, if he refuses, will result in his being killed. Having no alternative, he accepts. Leopold pulls her close and kisses her a long time, sealing the deal, and then says, in perfect, hardboiled style, "I don't think I'll hate you. I might have to kill you, but I don't think hate will have anything to do with it."

The unnumbered eighteen-page typescript is pulled together from more than one draft, and is not seamless ("Louie" begins the story as "Ernie"). Dating is based on the folder, which gives the year (1944) and a note that these pages of a "tenement crime story" represent the third and fourth drafts. Henry was the name of a blind African-American friend living in the tenement neighborhood around Temple and Figueroa, where Bradbury wrote during the war years. Bradbury knew the stage drama of Belgian Nobel laureate Maurice Maeterlinck, and turned down a chance to adapt a 1970s film version of *The Blue Bird* for George Cukor, but it's not clear why he would use this name in such an early story. Bradbury's working notes survive within the story folder, closing with this final line: "Perhaps SHE blinded him, eh?" The unpublished "One in the Dark" offers another variation on the mysterious women of "Autopsy" ("Killer, Come Back to Me!", selection 14) and "Forgotten Man" ("It Burns Me Up!", selection 24).

"Appointment for Dinner." ca. 1944. 1,300 words. A contemporary urban vampire story.

Kuvetli was one of many "displaced persons" who emigrated from Europe to Los Angeles before and during World War II. He soon realized that anything could be found in a large American city by placing an ad in the newspapers. So rather than hunt (and haunt) by night, prowling the streets for victims, he advertised in the singles section of the want ads. Not as a vampire seeking nourishment, of course.

The phone rang. It was a woman answering the ad. Polite and well spoken, her voice sounded cultured. They agreed to meet in the lobby of a nearby hotel. When they met she was impressed that he really did appear to be the twenty-six years of age he said he was, and not an older man misrepresenting himself. He asked her if she'd like a cocktail. She refused, saying that she hadn't eaten yet. So they agreed to take her car for a drive to the beach, and stop along the way to eat.

Kuvetli was feeling weaker and weaker from hunger. The feeling had grown in him since he'd left his room. It was becoming unbearable. He wondered if he should take her, even while she drove? Or should he master himself and wait until she stopped the car? As they drove he touched her hand and, perhaps sensing something else, some other longing in his touch, need seemed to rise in her, too. She pulled the car to the side of the road. A moment—then they kissed. Suddenly, both pulled back quickly. "'Damn you!' she shouted. Her eyes were insane with disappointment. Her whole body shook with frustrated desire."

He touched her cheek, scratched it lightly. The thick makeup came off, showing wrinkled skin underneath. She did the same with his face. He laughed, finding humor in the irony of two vampires finding—and trying to prey on—each other. She was still full of rage, however, and frustration, but she agreed to drive him back to his apartment. As she tore off into the night in her car, he went into his room just in time to answer a new phone call. "Kuvetli's eyes narrowed. The evening was yet young."

This short piece survives in a continuous six-page numbered typescript. It did circulate in this form, and includes a Julius Schwartz agency cover sheet. The story does not appear in any of Bradbury's composition or submission records, but internal references, paper, and typeface indicate a date no later than 1944.

ANNOTATIONS

1. The Sea Shell

2.36–37 "Aw, . . . Captain!"] The war-play banter of the children anticipates the childlike language of Johnny Choir, the combat soldier who still thinks he's playing at war, of "The Ducker" (selection 3) and its sequel, "Bang! You're Dead!" (selection 21).

2.39–40 lambent . . . languorous] Bradbury was still consulting his copy of *Hartrampf's Vocabulary*, which offered a nontraditional way to search for synonyms and antonyms to bolster descriptive passages. Both "lambent" and languor" appear in tables listing words for flickering light (lambent) and words for weakness, exhaustion, and apathy (languor). Bradbury would soon leave this work behind as his descriptive powers continued to mature.

3.29 Fox Lake] A recreational lake along the Fox River in Lake County, about fifteen miles west of Bradbury's boyhood home in Waukegan, Illinois. The Bradbury family was familiar with many of the vacation lakes in the northeastern Illinois and southeastern Wisconsin border counties.

3.39 Omar Khayyams] Johnny's mother is characterizing her son and his contemporaries in terms of an often-paraphrased philosophical point (to live for today), which resonates throughout the various verse rubiai attributed to the Persian astronomer-poet Omar Khayyam (1048–1131) and translated by the nineteenth-century British scholar Edward FitzGerald. Bradbury would have simply picked up the association in passing, and was probably not aware of specific verses of FitzGerald's work. Quatrains 54 and 74 of FitzGerald's fourth version are perhaps the best exemplars of Bradbury's allusion. The Classics Club multiple-version edition of *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* (New York: Black, 1942) would be typical of the latest editions available to Bradbury at that time.

3.40–4.20 When you're older . . . funny-like] The implication that Johnny's mother knows the sorrows and disappointments of adulthood is part of a larger dynamic in Bradbury's work of this period. He was already imagining a novel

that would probe the vast and often combative psychological gulf between children and adults; outlines would soon follow, and by the mid-1940s he had developed outlines and some text passages for a town where the children and the senior citizens regarded each other as distinctly different creatures. This theme survived in the story episodes and fragments of *Summer Morning, Summer Night* and the published works that emerged from it, *Dandelion Wine* (1957) and, more fully, *Farewell Summer* (2007). See Eller and Touponce, *The Life of Fiction*, chapter 1; Eller, *Becoming Ray Bradbury*, chapter 27; the *Summer Morning, Summer Night* materials were collected in a limited edition under that title (2007).

4.3 catcher's mitt] Bradbury's mention of a catcher's mitt is ironic; his older brother Skip, a gifted athlete, passed down an old but valued catcher's mitt to him around 1930. Bradbury immediately traded it for a fantasy figurine, earning a sound thumping from his brother.

4.36–37 "Down . . . day—"] These lines may allude to part of the second stanza of John Masefield's "Sea Fever" (1902): "And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying, / And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the seagulls crying." Thanks to his mentor Edmond Hamilton, Bradbury already had a fair command of British poetry; Masefield was Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom when Bradbury wrote this story. The poem's title bridges to the child's illness, playing into Bradbury's natural tendency to use word associations in his writing.

5.1 "Come down to the sea in ships—" Psalms 107:23-24: "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep." (King James Version)

2. Everything Instead of Something (Doodad)

7.1 the Shop] A Bradburyian homage to A. E. Van Vogt, whose "Weapon Shop" and the *Weapon Makers* novella were based on a future where the right to bear arms was protected from government interference by the sanctuary-like weapon shop environments. The series ran through issues in John W. Campbell's *Astounding Science Fiction* from December 1942 through April 1943, just as Bradbury was beginning to compose "Doodad."

13.14–15 semantics] Bradbury's use of this term usually steers clear of traditional semantics, understood broadly as the study of meaning, which by the 1950s was being adapted to the programming needs of computer science. During the 1930s and 1940s, genre writers such as Robert Heinlein, A. E. Van Vogt and L. Ron Hubbard were influenced (directly or indirectly) by Alfred Korzyb-

ski's *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics* (1933); Heinlein discovered this work through Stuart Chase's more general overview of General Semantics in *The Tyranny of Words* (1938), and over the next two years attended lectures by Korzybski. Heinlein's primary influence was S. I. Hayakawa's *Language in Action* (1940), which, like Chase's book, mediated Korzybski's General Semantics through more traditional disciplinary roots. In any case, Heinlein probably transmitted the spirit, if not the theory, of General Semantics to Bradbury during the years (1938–41) that they interacted. Bradbury seems to have understood that his older peers saw General Semantics as a more powerful way of perceiving, interpreting, and communicating information about the Cosmos than the language of traditional logic could provide. Later, during the summer of 1944, Bradbury's mentor and friend Leigh Brackett recommended that he read both Chase and Hayakawa, but his interest in General Semantics was on the wane; what surfaces in some of his early 1943 stories ("King of the Gray Spaces," "Doodad," "The Shape of Things," and "Referent") exhibits a growing wariness of General Semantics, which seemed capable of revealing more about creativity and the subconscious than he was willing to address in his own mind.

14.39 oddsblodkins . . . ettubrutus] The minced-oath origins of this English Renaissance era term "odds bodkins" ("God's body") plays into the semantic exercise in meaning offered by the Weapon Shop proprietor. This term, along with "ettubrutus," is simply a placeholder in the story, illustrating (as Korzybski maintained in General Semantics) that our perception is only capable of receiving—as we are likewise only capable of communicating—imperfect "abstractions" of reality. Bradbury, who is making fun of what he understands of General Semantics in this story, almost certainly intends the misspelling of the former term, the compression of the latter, and may have been aware of the irony that Shakespeare, rather than Caesar, is the originator of the latter phrase.

3. The Ducker

18.18 "Bang! You're dead!"] In both "The Ducker" and "Bang! You're Dead!" (selection 21), Johnny Choir's inability to understand the difference between the war-play of children and actual combat is expressed in the same kind of playful language that Bradbury's Johnny Bishop uses in "The Sea Shell" (selection 1).

19.30 4-F?"] The draft board designation for registered individuals who are called for the physical examination and subsequently medically disqualified from military service.

21.3 juju paint] During the colonial era, a general European reference to the religions of western Africa. Bradbury's more specific reference here involves the images of painted practitioners of West African witchcraft that Johnny had seen in his old geography textbooks. Bradbury's unpublished story "Juju Bones" engages the rituals more directly by way of the juju bones that function as gambling dice; neither of these references exhibit any real knowledge of West African superstitions; Bradbury's growing awareness of the intermingled Catholic and Native American superstitions and death rituals would become the primary cultural focus outside of mainstream American culture.

21.7 German Stuka] The Junkers JU 87, one of the best known dive bombing platforms of World War II; it's effectiveness against concentrated ground targets makes it an apt weapons platform to threaten Johnny Choir's combat vulnerability.

21.31–36 Mareth . . . Gafsa] The Mareth Line, part of the French pre-war defensive perimeter in southern Tunisia, defined Germany's final defensive position in North Africa during the late winter and spring of 1943. The allied breach of this line was spearheaded from the east and south by British troops; Johnny Choir's fictitious American unit would have moved into Tunisia from the west, probably through the hotly contested Kasserine Pass (21.35) and Gafsa (21.36). The remnants of the German-Italian Afrika Korps surrendered and Tunisia was secured by 13 May 1943, just after Bradbury completed "The Ducker."

22.27 Fox River, Illinois] This major tributary of the Illinois river flows south through the western portion of Lake County, about twenty miles west of Waukegan; Bradbury was born and lived most of his first fourteen years in Waukegan, and visited many of the rivers and lakes along the eastern Wisconsin and Illinois border counties.

25.37 the Book] A loose reference to Johnny' Choir's seemingly predestined fate to live through the war in spite of his perfect innocence in the face of brutal combat, alluding perhaps to the Hebrew Book of the Dead and, more directly, the New Testament Book of Life, referred to multiple times in The Book of Revelation, in which the names of all righteous souls are recorded.

4. The Shape of Things (Tomorrow's Child)

27.0 "The Shape of Things"] The title plays on a common figure of speech, on the fourth-dimensional polygonal shape of the baby, and probably on Bradbury's immense admiration for H. G. Wells, who had published *The Shape of Things to Come* in 1933. Bradbury was much taken by the film *Things to Come*,

released in 1936 with a script by Wells; Bradbury attended a 1939 revival of the film in New York, during the first world science fiction convention (Eller, *Becoming Ray Bradbury*, 35), and discussed the final scene in various articles and interviews.

27.1 hypno-machine] Bradbury was fascinated by hypnotism and knew from an early age that he was susceptible; over time, he came to believe in his own ability to sublimate pain through self-hypnosis. He occasionally sought dentists who used hypnosis as an alternative to oral anesthetic, and in later years used an intuitive form of self-hypnosis to minimize the need for pain killers in post-surgical recovery. The allusion to hypno-machines in "The Shape of Things" implies an alternative to medication during childbirth in Bradbury's imagined future world.

28.13 birth trauma] Here, as in "The Small Assassin" (volume 1, selection 23) and "The Reincarnate" (volume 3), Bradbury's deep interest in the psychological and physiological mysteries of birth propel the plot of "The Shape of Things." Bradbury could not recall reading the work of Melanie Klein on birth trauma, but by the early 1940s he had read a fair range of psychological studies by Freud, Karen Horney, and others. The S1 text, completely re-written after the war years, replaces the birth trauma reference with "birth pressure" as a major factor in the "dimensional distructure" that "shocked" the child into another dimension.

28.13–15 conditions . . . distructure] Bradbury's superficial terminology provides a form of Wellsian suggestiveness that deflects the need for any degree of hard science in the narrative. Readers must chose a way between a willing suspension of disbelief or an outright annoyance with Bradbury's lack of scientific verisimilitude. His enthusiasm for the life sciences, as well as his abiding fascination with the transitional traumas of childbirth, overshadows the technical shortcomings to some degree.

28.16 birth-mechs] Bradbury often used "mech" for "mechanism" in his early stories; these references range from physical machineries to psychological processes, as in his 1944 story "Defense Mech" (volume 3; first published 1946). In his 1947 rewrite for S1, Bradbury clarified the term in his new opening, where Peter Horn tells his wife, "These new birth-mechanisms do everything but father the child for you." This re-write frames what was becoming an outdated shorthand term, but none of his subsequent revisions (1947 for S1, 1969 for IS) articulate any degree of specificity for the science or technology behind these devices. "The Shape of Things" is a story about humans caught a situation that they can never fully understand.

28.22–23 Our eyes . . . baby.] The description emerged out of his high-school astronomy class reading of E. A. Abbott's *Flatland* (1884), where the two-dimensional creatures of Flatland cannot fully apprehend the sphere from three-dimensional space as anything more than an expanding or contracting circle passing through their universe. Bradbury's analogy accounts for the inability of the parents to fully see their trans-dimensional child through three-dimensional eyes.

29.18–19 Baby . . . over] The 1943 rejection of "The Shape of Things" by Astounding Science Fiction editor John W. Campbell may have been due in part to Bradbury's two interludes where the story is observed from the trans-dimensional infant's point of view. Campbell was wary whenever an author assumed an alien point of view; he accepted it with some of his "hard science fiction" writers, as in A. E. Van Vogt's "Black Destroyer" (July 1939), but he had already rejected Bradbury's "Chrysalis" science fiction tale (volume 1, selection 11) in part because of a narrative interlude from the perspective of the chrysalid superman.

29.25 piping of piccolos] No baby (especially not a trans-dimensional one) could know what a piccolo is; this logic flaw in the first of the story's two infant point-of-view interludes disappeared in the 1947 re-write.

30.1 maternity-hypnosis] Bradbury's interest in hypnotic alternatives to anesthetic (as in the hypno-machines mentioned earlier in the story) here extends to psychological and trauma medications; the mother is prepared for news of the supposed loss of her child through a form of hypnotic pre-conditioning. The leap from conditioning to mind control is not a great one; this reference, as well as most of the police presence and pressure in the final stages of the story, are filtered out in the 1947 S1 revisions.

30.12 semantics-institute work at Glen-Anglo-Lang,] Bradbury's peaking interest in semantics is evident in several stories written between January and May 1943, including "King of the Gray Spaces" (volume 1, selection 19), "Doodad" (volume 2, selection 2), and the previously unpublished original version of "The Shape of Things." In all of the published versions of "The Shape of Things," Horn's wife (re-named Polly) does not work; in the original copy-text (TS1) version, however, Ellen Horn works at a semantics institute in Glendale, California. Ellen's professional background may play into her ability to sense that Py is really her child (36.8–12), even though she has been told that her child died at birth.

31.38 Griffith Park] North of west Los Angeles, in the hills surrounding the Griffith Observatory. Bradbury took his wife there on dates during the early months of their courtship in the late spring of 1946.

32.15 Py] Peter Horn, a naturalist in the 1943 version of the story, calls the child Py as a diminutive for "Pyramidaceious Hornus," the imaginary breed that he invents to convince his wife that the child is a pet acquired on one of his expeditions. Bradbury, an avid dinosaur enthusiast as both child and man, may have had in mind "Protoceratops Andrewsi," the highly publicized name given to a new species of dinosaur during the 1920s in honor of its discoverer, Roy Chapman Andrews; like the real-life Andrews, Horn takes the honor of appending his own name to his "discovery" (in reality, his own child). In the S1 revisions of 1947, Peter Horn becomes an export-import businessman, and does not try to pass off the trans-dimensional child as a pet; in this version, it is his wife who names her child "Py"—simply a mother's endearing short-hand for her son's pyramidal form.

32.30 atomic time] Atomic clocks register the microwaves emitted by electrons fluctuating through various energy levels; the intervals thus detected provide accuracy in timekeeping magnitudes beyond that available through mechanized time keeping. Bradbury was thinking purely in metaphorical terms; the first atomic clock would not be developed until 1949.

34.5 tesseract] The baby perceives the Horn's house as a four-dimensional tesseract form as Bradbury replays the previous scene's homecoming, this time from an inter-dimensional point of view. The description is apt; the child envisions the cube in four dimensions, just as we envision a two-dimensional square as a cube in three dimensions.

35.14 Street Charge officer] Given the context here and in the following paragraphs, this futuristic title is roughly equivalent to today's "beat cop" or neighborhood patrolman.

5. The Night

40.4 Sam and Henry] The Sam 'n Henry radio series was broadcast from WGN in Chicago during the period (1926–28) when "The Night" is set. These and other entertainments mentioned in the early part of the story sets the mood and begins to recover the sounds of a bygone era, in much the same way that he would invoke sensations of the 1920s and 1930s in other "Green Town, Illinois" reflections on his Waukegan youth.

40.8 Mrs. Singer's.] A Jewish lady who, along with her two sons, ran an ice cream shop in Waukegan that Bradbury and his family often visited during his pre-teen years.

41.5 Skipper] Bradbury's older brother, Leonard, Jr. (1916-2005), was always known as "Skipper" when he was young, and "Skip" when he was older. Skipper's physical description is close to his real life model. In this story, both boys are a year older than the actual Bradbury siblings, but remain four years apart. This age differential would be narrowed, and actually reversed, when the story was re-written for Dandelion Wine.

41.24 Al Jolson] One of the most prominent vocal recording artists during the 1920s; his major hits played regularly on the Bradbury family radio. One of these, "I Wonder What's Become of Sally?" (1924), became the title of a Bradbury story (ca. 1945; published 1997). During the mid-1930s, shortly after arriving in Los Angeles as a teenager, Bradbury attended the *Shell Chateau* radio shows that Jolson hosted in Hollywood.

42.20–21 silent radio . . . crystal bobbins] Bradbury's word associations establish strong streams of consciousness in his fiction, and these are often sensate-based. The silent radio and the crystal bobbins of the chandelier may have been triggered together from deep memory; one of his earliest Waukegan memories, aged three, include his grandfather Bradbury making primitive radios out of a wire spool and crystal, and letting him listen to a signal picked up from a nearby Chicago radio station.

42.24 Shorts.] Bradbury grew slowly until high school; that factor, along with the growing spurts of his older brother Skip, led almost inevitably to the family nickname of "Shorts" or "Shorty." As late as 1945, at the age of twenty-five, Bradbury still occasionally signed letters home as "Shorty."

42.29 St. James Street.] Except for two brief sojourns in the Southwest, Bradbury lived with his parents at 11 South St. James Street in Waukegan, Illinois, where the story is set. The house was rented from Bradbury's grandparents, who lived next door at the corner of Washington and St. James Streets

42.32 the ravine] the ravine that wound around three sides of the immediate Bradbury neighborhood became a recurring metaphor for the ambiguous boundary between life and death in many of his Green Town stories and novels, especially *Dandelion Wine* and *Farewell Summer* (originally part of the same densely-packed novel typescript). The buildings and streets named in the following passages correlate to actual historical locations in Waukegan.

43.17–18 Grandfather passed away;] Bradbury's first encounter with loss came at age five, when his paternal grandfather Samuel Hinkston Bradbury died of meningitis during the summer of 1926. He would later build a few fragmentary memories into a close bond with his grandfather; these included the homemade crystal radio, and the launching of fire balloons during the last fourth of July that they shared together.

43.19–20 comment succinctly upon politics] This observation is perhaps the most striking break from the eight-year-old perspective of the second-person narrator. Many of the reflective observations on death reach beyond the childhood sensibility, and may have led to a few of the less formal word choices and deletions (such as 43.39) found in the DC^{1947} revisions (see the "Historical Collation of Post-Copy-Text Substantives" for this story).

43.20 Death is your little sister] Bradbury's younger sister Elizabeth, born in March 1927 when Bradbury was six years old, died the following winter of influenza (Weller, 37, 40–41).

45.11 minor-key violins] Bradbury took violin lessons for a time in grade school, and would have known at least the basic major and minor key signatures.

46.20 A man clears his throat] This phrase would evolve by 1948 into the final line of his *Suspense* CBS Radio play "Summer Night" (adapted by Robert Richards); Bradbury's original story was published in 1950 as "The Whole Town's Sleeping," perhaps Bradbury's best-known tale of small-town terror. Like "The Night," this riveting tale was pulled into *Dandelion Wine* (1957).

6. Perchance to Dream (Asleep in Armageddon)

47.6–7 *Leonard Sale*] Bradbury often used names of family, friends, and acquaintances in his stories; his father and his brother both carried the surname "Leonard."

47.19 RESCUE SHIP LOGARITHM] Bradbury's selective interest in the historical and literary aspects of his high-school astronomy class did not impart any numeracy skills at all (he dropped the second semester, which involved the science of optics and the technology of lens grinding). But he knew that logarithmic tables significantly shortened mathematical calculations. This advantage had led to great advances in astronomical studies and celestial navigation; a rescue ship named "Logarithm" would commemorate a seventeenth-century mathematical breakthrough that rescued subsequent generations of astronomers from insurmountable calculations, adding a subtle irony to the fate that awaits those answering the distress call from Planetoid 787.

49.41–50.2 *War and Peace* . . . T. S. Eliot's poetry] Bradbury has equipped Sales's craft with long (Tolstoy) and difficult (Eliot) readings that will keep his mind active until the rescue ship arrives. These authors, as well as Balzac, may have entered the story in revision, after Bradbury courted and married Marguerite McClure in 1947; her deep reading of European masters complimented his narrower familiarity with British and American writers.

50.6 UN Anthem] An allusion to the national anthems played in American military cinemas and many foreign cinemas before or after a feature film. Bradbury's allusion to the United Nations would have been added in his unlocated postwar revisions for S1; the Dumbarton Oaks conference of August–October 1944, where the United Nations concept was first formulated, occurred more than a year after Bradbury first composed "Perchance to Dream."

50.24–25 how good it is to be alive . . . William Saroyan] Bradbury was drawn to the early works of William Saroyan, and eventually had a chance to meet him. Sales is alluding to a passage from Saroyan's preface to *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze* (1934): "Try as much as possible to be wholly alive, with all your might, and when you laugh, laugh like hell and when you get angry, get good and angry. Try to be alive. You will be dead soon enough." Saroyan was not as well known Britain, where the Hart-Davis editors cut the entire allusion from the version published in *The Day It Rained Forever* (*DRF*).

51.30 rictal smile] The Latin derivation is literally "open the mouth wide"; the implication in the story context is a smile that is forced or strained. Bradbury may also have been thinking of the death rictus, a description he would later use in *Something Wicked This Way Comes* (1962).

52.26 bivalvular] Literally, having two valves. Bradbury's image-driven imagination associates the anatomical design of bivalves (such as clams) to the two hemispheres of the human brain. Biology and physiology were his two principal science electives in high school, and this knowledge base often stimulated his imagination; but here, however, his association is not accurate.

53.5 the sound, the fury] Given the allusions to Shakespeare in the original title and within the text, this brief passage from the catalog of psychic violence invoked by Sales may allude to Macbeth, Act V, scene v: "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player / That struts and frets his hour upon the stage / And then is heard no more; it is a tale. / Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, / Signifying nothing."

54.2 All the world's a stage] Here and at 55.10, Bradbury alludes to "All the world's a stage," spoken by the melancholy Jaques in *As You Like It*, Act II, scene vii.

54.24–25 Helen King] For the first printing of this story, *Planet Stories* editors apparently thought enough of this passing reference to throw in a small interior sketch of an actress or dancer in exotic dress. The actual reference for this memory is untraceable, but given Bradbury's propensity to drift into word associations, and his encyclopedic knowledge of feature films from this era, the allusion could have been constructed from Helen Twelvetrees, featured in the 1933 film *King for a Night*, or Helen Vinson, star of the 1935 thriller *King of the Damned*.

55.7 thy appointed round!] "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." Bradbury paraphrases the inscription on the U.S. Post Office Building in New York City. The building's architect, William Kendall (1856–1941) gleaned this inscription from his own loose and flawed translation of Herodotus, *Histories*, vol. 4, book 8, verse 98. (Fred R. Shapiro, *The Yale Book of Quotations*, 419).

55.9–10 ah, sleep; perchance to dream.] In his weakened mental state, Sale conflates paraphrases of lines from *Hamlet* Act III, scene i as he contemplates ending his life before the ancient ghosts take over his mind.

55.21 wars and worms of wars] A bitter allusion to the Biblical "wars and rumors of wars" (Matthew 24:6).

56.2 A pox on both your houses!] A paraphrase of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, Act III, scene i. Sale, aware that the two ghostly warlords fighting over control of his mind may soon make an end of him, invokes the dying Mercutio's curse on the families of both star-crossed lovers.

7. Referent

59.0 "Referent"] In language studies, this is usually a designation for a thing referred to, but a referent may also be the person referring to something else. This term looms large in the world of General Semantics that Bradbury was lightly exploring, and indeed in any aspect of formal communication studies. The term eventually becomes the center of the struggle for freedom between the young boy Roby and the Morpheus creature who encounters him.

59.1 Roby Morrison] This was the surname of one of Maggie Bradbury's supervisors at Abbey Rents, a medical equipment supply business where she began to work as the company's newsletter editor shortly after her 1947 marriage to Bradbury.

59.2 Orthopedic Island] Orthology is the art of correct grammar and the correct use of words. Here, and in the orthopedic stations of volume 1's "King of the Gray Spaces," Bradbury imagines a future where the brightest children are channeled into a semantics-heavy education (thus, the conflation of "ortho" and "pedia") to prepare them for the highly complex scientific world they will inherit.

59.8 Semantics School] The technology-aided indoctrination of Roby's island-school environment, as well as the carefully orchestrated elimination of individuality, is only indirectly addressed, but the overtones are reminiscent of Huxley's *Brave New World*; by the early 1940s, Bradbury had read nearly all of Huxley's works.

59.24–25 about to give one complexes] From his readings, Bradbury would have known the popularized (and slightly distorted) characteristics of Freud's Oedipus and Electra complexes; his reading of Dr. Frederic Wertham's *Dark Legend* offered modern interpretations of the Orestes complex involving matricide. Given his layman's fascination with psychological disorder, he would never use the term lightly, even in a passing comment.

60.2 Freud Book] To this point in his career, Bradbury's reading of Freud was largely limited to his Modern Library edition of *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud* (1938), which he acquired shortly after high school. This omnibus volume included *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

60.14 Sandman] In children's fairy tales or bedtime stories, the Sandman is usually depicted as the bringer of peaceful sleep and pleasant dreams. Bradbury's enthusiasm for fairy tales, instilled at an early age by his aunt Neva, would have familiarized him with the Sandman in the works of Hans Christian Andersen; given the accelerating pace of his fiction reading during the early 1940s, Bradbury may have known the more evil characterization of E.T.A. Hoffman's short story, "The Sandman" (1816). In "Referent," Roby initially sees the alien shape-shifter as an intrusion from the dream world.

8. The Calculator (Jonah of the Jove-Run)

66.1 Nibley] The title character's name is another of the many Bradbury character names taken from real life. Reid (Richard) Nibley was one of the amateur actors in Laraine Day's Wilshire Players group in Los Angeles; Bradbury participated in shows with him during the 1940-41 seasons. Nibley, then a teenager, later became a noted pianist, composer and music professor.

66.18 astrogators] The natural marriage of astronautics and celestial navigation, and the consequent concept of the astrogator as a crew position on interplanetary or interstellar space missions, first evolved in popular culture through science fiction and was further popularized through television and genre films. The use of the term in science fiction diminished after the 1940s and 1950s, but the field is still known as astrogation in certain contexts.

67.18 Jupiter . . . with its coterie of moons] His fall 1937 high school astronomy class provided a basic survey of the solar system and an introduction to cosmology. At the time Bradbury composed this story, Jupiter was known to have fifteen moons; only the Galilean moons (Io, Europa, Ganymede, Callisto) and Amalthea were named. Bradbury's odd use of "coterie" suggests that he consulted his *Hartrampf's Vocabulary* and found the term while searching the table for "assemblage–fellowship."

71.31 aphelion] The metaphor alludes to the point in the path of a celestial body that is farthest from the body it orbits, and in particular the unobservable aphelion points of comets with extremely eccentric solar orbits. Nibley will not lose track of the suspicious Bruno, even when he is out of sight.

71.36 Asteroid Belt] Early in his career, Bradbury's fascination with the Asteroid Belt (where a fourth planet may once have existed between Mars and Jupiter) centered on a romanticized association with hiding places and associated space adventures; previous situations include the renegade space patrol officer of "Final Victim" (volume 1, selection 3), the space pirates of "The Monster Maker" (volume 1, selection 18), and the far more intriguing ghosts of "Perchance to Dream" ("Asleep in Armageddon," volume 2, selection 6).

75.28 bulger] A descriptive term for the hard-shell spacesuits formed from concentric tire-like or bulging rings of material, as popularized in pulp illustrations and later scientific magazine illustrations through the 1940s and 1950s. Bradbury used the term in two earlier stories, "Promotion to Satellite" and "The Monster Maker" (volume 1, selections 9 and 16).

77.39 perihelion] The trajectory of interplanetary missions will, in part, follow a solar orbital track, and may dip to a perihelion (closest point of approach to the sun) en route to other worlds. The implication is that the rest of Nibley's crewmates will return to the inner solar system, and their homes on Earth.

9. The Emissary

79.18 sickness had put him to bed.] Bradbury spent weeks in bed with whooping cough during the fall of his second grade year; during this time the world that came to him was largely imaginative, emerging from the stories (including Poe's) that his aunt Neva read to him.

81.9 Mrs. Holloway] This character name may derive from the Hathaways, a family that rented apartments in the same St Andrews Place house as the Bradbury family in Los Angeles, circa 1937–1942. The character Doc Hathaway appears in two of *The Martian Chronicles* story-chapters, "—And the Moon Be Still as Bright" and "The Long Years." More directly, the Will Halloway and his father are central to the plot of Bradbury's 1962 novel, *Something Wicked This Way Comes*.

82.7 "What do they do in the graveyard, Mom, under the ground?"] The childlike musing touches on the plot of "Interim" (1947), a short-short story that Bradbury would write about the imagined gossip and rumors that might pass between graves in a cemetery (first published in *Dark Carnival*).

82.38 The war] World War II is in the distant background here, as it is in "The Sea Shell" (selection 1).

83.30 a pageant outside his window] During 1943 Bradbury extended this image into "The Windowpane and the Leaflet," a fanciful dialog between a dying leaf and an enduring windowpane from a house where a small boy lives. The story remained unpublished, and is described in Appendix B of volume 1.

84.2–3 he and Torry had once run together] Bradbury had fond memories of Pete, the family dog during his Waukegan years, who would pull the ten-year-old boy on roller skates downtown to buy weekend newspapers containing the latest Tarzan comics.

84.3 the ravine] Bradbury's small-town Illinois stories often involve or refer to the ravine and its imagined terrors. Today it runs in part through Ray Bradbury Park (dedicated 1990), which roughly ran north to south, dividing Bradbury's South St. James Street neighborhood from the downtown Waukegan. References appear as well in "The Night" (selection 5) and "The Man Upstairs" (selection 12).

84.32 Bad dog, good dog, come home] These emotions capture the real-life recollections of the week that Bradbury's dog Pete ran away during the early 1930s in Waukegan. He hugged him, then beat him, finally begging forgiveness from his dear pet: "But it haunted me for the rest of my life that I could have done that to him, that sweet, good-natured friend, my pal forever" (introduction, *Dogs Think Every Day Is Christmas*, 1997). The incident prompted "Bless Me, Father," a late-life story along similar lines (*Woman's Day*, Dec. 11, 1984; collected in *The Toynbee Convector*, 1988).

10. And Watch the Fountains

86.21 a *time machine!"*] The liar's tale parameters of *Astounding Science Fiction*'s "Probability Zero" column specified that the tale must violate a law of physics in a plausible way; selection for publication generally rewarded authors who could do this with some degree of story-telling subtlety, but Bradbury's tale is more psychologically playful than subtle. The obligatory contradiction, in this case supplied by the impossibilities of temporal displacement, merely allowed him to return to the kind of humorous anecdotes he had placed in fanzines between 1938 and 1941. Only the style itself shows any sign of maturity beyond the temporal hijinks of "Hollerbochen's Dilemma" (volume 1, selection A1).

87.11–12 and watch the fountains!"] The title metaphor, derived from Morgan's mind's-eye image of blood spraying like a fountain from Thomson's stab wounds, represents the hatred motivating every character action in the story.

87.19 ozone and lilac] Bradbury's enthusiasm for biology and physiology did not extend into chemistry, but his related passion for observable phenomena led him to read a great deal about how the sensory organs function. He would not have known anything about the tri-oxide atomic structure or reactive properties of ozone; his use of it in a superficial "liar's tale" about time machines was almost certainly based on the general awareness that lightning and high-voltage machinery will often present a detectible odor of ozone. The accompanying lilac odor may merely represent Morgan's after-shave, allowing the taciturn Thompson the satisfaction of knowing his murderer has arrived before he even sees him.

87.30 a time machine, too!"] Thompson's time machine is, of course, a ruse, and perhaps a Bradburyian tweak of the whole "Probability Zero" concept. This column would disappear from *Astounding Science Fiction* before the end of the war. But Thompson's machine is very real in a psychological context, for the threat of it will pursue Morgan through time and haunt him for the rest of his life.

88.4 Morgan went back home in his time machine] Morgan's machine combines the further contradiction of spatial displacement (to and from Thompson's laboratory) with a return journey to the past (a contradiction of the Second Law of Thermodynamics). It's not clear from the narrative context whether Bradbury intentionally enhanced the basic contradiction of time travel in these ways, but given the challenge of the "Probability Zero," ground rules, this intention cannot be ruled out.

11. The Million Year Picnic

91.14 medals of Mendelian skin-coloration] These are evolved or inherited pigmentation irregularities, couched within an allusion to the theory of genetics and inheritance probabilities developed by Gregor Mendel (1822–1884). Bradbury's labored way of referring to the child's freckles is authorially intrusive in the context of this more mature Bradbury story; he would later revise the passage out of the text.

91.20–21 the alien thought patterns of grownups.] By the early 1940s, Bradbury's reading of Richard Hughes's Innocent Voyage (A High Wind in Jamaica) and Christopher Morley's Thunder on the Left had reinforced his own sense of the vast psychological gulf between adults and children; like these other authors, he sometimes regarded the forced transition into the adult world as a distinct physiological evolution as well. Intimations of this view surface here and in "The Sea Shell" (selection 1) and "Referent" (selection 7).

92.22 it vibrated singing or talking to you] The old-fashioned principle of Bradbury's "atomic-radio" harkens back to the primitive crystal radio receivers, also called "cat's whisker" receivers, that his grandfather would make out of spools and wire. These were powerless instruments, responding passively to broadcast signals. The allusion, and the fact that the father must press the instrument to the bones around his ear to hear the last signals from a dying Earth, subtly reinforces fragile situation of the human-neo-Martians.

95.16 Night came quickly in the thin atmosphere,] The source of this observation is undoubtedly Edgar Rice Burroughs; Bradbury had been a close reader of the John Carter of Mars series since childhood, and although he no longer imitated Burroughs, certain images persisted in his imagination: "the Martian nights are extremely cold, and as there is practically no twilight or dawn, the changes in temperature are sudden and most uncomfortable, as are the transitions from brilliant daylight to darkness" (*A Princess of Mars*, chapter v). Today we know that Burroughs's romantic speculation that night falls swiftly on "Barsoom," like Bradbury's reference to swift Martian sunsets in "The Million Year Picnic," is inaccurate; photography provided by various NASA rovers reveals that sunlight reflected from dust in high regions of the atmosphere significantly extends the Martian sunset.

12. The Man Upstairs

101.29 "Yours not to question why,"] Grandma paraphrases the most famous line from Alfred, Lord Tennyson's 1854 narrative poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade."

102.8 Fu Manchu] Sax Rohmer's "insidious" Dr. Fu Manchu, the Chinese mastermind endowed with subtle and almost supernatural powers of evil genius, provides an apt allusion. The "yellow peril" Rohmer novels and films flourished during the 1920s and 1930s; Bradbury doesn't have to say that the windowpane is yellow; only the allusion is needed.

107.6 the ravine] This Waukegan landmark would always be a transitional zone between light and dark, life and death. The Lonely One of "The Whole Town's Sleeping" (1948, 1950) stalks his victims through the ravine, and in "The Man Upstairs" Bradbury associates the vampire creature Kolberman with the same locale. See also annotations to "The Sea Shell" (selection 1) and "The Emissary" (selection 9).

107.8 make Dante cringe] Dante's Inferno describes many horrors of the Underworld; Bradbury was already familiar with Gustav Doré's vivid nine-

teenth-century engravings of this work; he would later buy early oversized editions in London bookstores. Bradbury's actual paternal grandfather maintained a respectable household library, and all of his sons were also well-read; a reference to Dante would not be out of place in the boarding house that Grandmother Bradbury ran after her husband died in 1926.

107.18 Marion Barsumian] The woman's surname is a play on "Barsoomian," a native of Mars ("Barsoom") in the John Carter series of Edgar Rice Burroughs.

13. Reunion

111.26 Robber's Roost] The Utah hideout for Butch Cassidy's gang and other outlaws; Bradbury would have known of it from his father's western recollections and his passion for western magazine stories.

113.5–6 a stage-play of *Hamlet* with John Barrymore] The legendary reckless Barrymore lifestyle deeply fascinated Bradbury. A few days after Barrymore's death in May 1942, artist John Decker showed his deathbed sketch of Barrymore to Bradbury.

114.37–38 reactive image] Bradbury's general reading on sensation and sense organs began around 1940; however, there was also a personal dimension to his study of vision and therapy for poor eyesight. By the time he was writing "Reunion," he had read Aldous Huxley's *The Art of Seeing*; within a year, this book would lead him to a regimen of relaxation therapy that arrested the progression of his myopia (Eller, *Becoming Ray Bradbury*, 82–83).

14. Autopsy ("Killer, Come Back to Me!")

118.20 tommy-gun] A hand-held "machine-gun" with a large-capacity circular magazine; for obvious reasons, this weapon was quickly adopted by outlaws and organized crime syndicates during Prohibition and used on into the Great Depression.

118.25 younger brother who wasn't much help] An allusion to the pathologist conducting the autopsy, and a subtle clue to the closing revelation that he was Johnny Broghman's brother. In a biographical context, Bradbury himself was the little brother who could never be a part of the rough and physical world that absorbed his older brother Skip.

124.36–37 Spring Street and Third] At the time, there was a parking lot and ample street parking near Spring and Third Streets. The rambling premises of

Central Stationery and Printing may be the model for the large magazine shop where Broghman gains control of Ricky's criminal operation.

125.28 Merritt] A. Merritt was one of Bradbury's early favorite pulp fantasy authors, a pleasant, benign-looking, round-faced writer-editor; Bradbury met him during his 1939 New York trip during the first world science fiction convention. For this story, Bradbury imagines his crime world gunsel Merritt as exactly the opposite in appearance from the popular writer Bradbury had met; given his habit of using names derived from the names of people he had known, the character is more than likely a whimsical name-play allusion.

125.29 gunsel] Bradbury (and many other noir readers) would have picked up this term for a gunman from Dashiell Hammett. By this time he had read Hammett's novels and John Huston's film adaptation of *The Maltese Falcon* was one of his favorites (the term "gunsel" figures in a prominent scene).

129.17–18 "Hill Street and Sixth. The Leighton Building,] Bradbury was familiar with this Los Angeles intersection as it existed during the 1930s and early 1940s. In 1940, his first run-in with police for being a late-night pedestrian occurred where Pershing Square forms the northwest corner of the intersection. The Paramount Theatre and the United Cigar Store (often a source of books) anchored the northeast corner. The Hollinsworth Building on the southeast corner may be the source of the Leighton Building reference in the story.

15. The Long Night

132.1 the apartment house] The tenement building owned by Mrs. Beach, once located near the intersection of Temple and Figueroa in downtown Los Angeles, provides the finely detailed setting of the story.

132.8–9 It was . . .care.] These early lines may have been inspired by similar sentences in the beginning of Raymond Chandler's story "Red Wind." Bradbury, an admirer of American detective fiction, could have read the story in the January 1938 issue of *Dime Detective* magazine. Chandler, Raymond. "Red Wind." In *Chandler: Stories and Early Novels, The Library of America* edited by Frank MacShane, 368-417, 1191–93. New York, 1995.

132.8 night in October] The Pachuco riots actually occurred in early June 1943, but October would always offer Bradbury's favorite seasonal setting.

132.14 draped over his body] The soft-cut or drape jacket look, as well as the wide, tight-cuffed pants and exaggerated lapels of the zoot suit, were adopted by some in the Hispanic communities of Los Angeles; these figures became targets when ethnic tensions boiled over into the Pachuco or Zoot Suit riots

132.25 *pachucos*] A term (Bradbury's unusual spelling is emended) with a range of meanings throughout and across the border regions of the Southwest; eventually, the term came to center on the younger generation of Mexican-Americans who adopted the drape or zoot suit look in cities like Los Angeles before and during World War II. Bradbury lived and worked in the Hispanic neighborhoods of Los Angeles from 1942 until the spring of 1945, and saw these cultural markers on a daily basis.

132.30–133.1 Temple Street] The Beach family's tenement building, along with several smaller residences that they owned, were located along the Temple and Figueroa Street intersection; this had been the western edge of the original pueblo, later Sonoratown; the plaza still existed, and formed a focus for the southern edge of the older Mexican-American community in downtown Los Angeles.

133.29 Fannie Floriana] Her character closely resembles a gifted singer with an operatic voice that Bradbury knew in the Figueroa Street neighborhood. He would later develop this character into a major role for his 1985 detective novel, Death Is a Lonely Business.

133.34 Olvera Street] An arts and crafts district north of the Los Angeles City Hall that still retained many of the aspects of the original Spanish and Mexican settlement. Bradbury often walked this street, and twice had his portrait sketched by Olvera Street artists (including the accomplished Fritz Zillig) just before World War II.

135.5 Masinello Pietro] Another close approximation of a real-life acquaintance during Bradbury's years in the Figueroa Street tenement. Masinello Pietro eventually became the subject and title of his own Bradbury story (*Connoisseur's World*, April 1964). "He was a wonderful man—he would come walking down the street followed by his dogs, and he had a goose that thought he was God. . . . He had a parrot on his shoulder, and some parakeets. . . . He wore gypsy clothes, a tambourine hat with bells . . ." (Eller interviews, Oct. 2002).

135.35 I liked jazz tunes] Behind Bradbury's characterization of his narrator's tastes, Bradbury was himself coming to appreciate the jazz scene. His New York agent, Julius Schwartz, was beginning to orient him to the New Orleans roots of jazz, the variant Chicago style of guitarist Eddie Condon, drummer Gene Krupa, and the early phase of Benny Goodman's sound.

136.35 talk of Germans] The intricate German spy networks of World War II were already being dramatized in film by the time that Bradbury, an avid filmgoer, was writing this tale. He saw nearly every film distributed by the major studios during the war; these included such popular action spy-thrillers as the

1941 Warner Brothers film *All Through the Night*, starring Humphrey Bogart, where even organized crime enters the fight against Nazi infiltration.

141.10 her fat strangled her] Fannie's need to sleep in a chair due to her morbid obesity, and her mysterious murder, would carry through to Bradbury's first detective novel: "Fannie had fallen, or been pushed, and could not get up. She had lain there in the middle of the night until her own weight crushed and smothered her" (*Death Is a Lonely Business*, 186–87).

142.37 Verdugos was there with a blonde woman,] An ironic touch; Verdugos, the man who hates all gringos, at a table with a blonde date. This "reveal" adds impact to the protagonist's confrontation scene with Sam, whom no one would have suspected: "Now, a guy like Verdugos, he *looks* dishonest. But a guy like you, no. No!"

143.2 *La Compañero*] A working class song of camraderie, set to a marching cadence in the paso doble dance style. The correct spelling is *La Campanera*.

145.8 that record!] Possibly one of the "sad songs" his brother had often played; he was playing an unnamed selection just minutes before he was killed by Sam.

16. Lazarus Come Forth

149.23 "Lazarus come forth,"] A clear reference to one of the best-known miracles of Jesus Christ, as recorded in John 11:43: "When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, Come Forth (King James version).

153.25 sulfacardium] Like the "tubular flouroscope" earlier in the story, this drug is a typical Bradbury fabrication designed to advance the action. The combination of sulfa (a class of drugs) and cardium (heart) suggests a dangerous stimulant, perhaps only used in such extreme circumstance as the attempted revival of the legendary 51 Group scientist.

156.5 Then, Lazarus laughed.] Bradbury is playing on the title of Eugene O'Neill's rarely performed but often published stage drama *Lazarus Laughed* (written 1925; first performed 1928).

17. There Was an Old Woman

159.22 battle of the Argonne] This allusion tells us more about Bradbury than it does about the Old Woman's memories. The Meuse-Argonne Offensive, or Battle of the Argonne Forest, continued from Sept. 26, 1918 until the Armistice of Nov. 11, 1918. This was probably the single bloodiest battle in U. S. military his-

tory, but it also serves as backdrop for one of Bradbury's dearest memories—the circus sideshow performer Mr. Electrico, who provided the spark for Bradbury's adolescent decision to become a writer, told him that he had known Bradbury in an earlier life. Electrico claimed to have been an Army chaplain during World War I, and that Bradbury had been his best friend, who died in his arms during the battle of the Ardennes Forest in 1918. Bradbury would always consider this claim of reincarnation to be part of his blessing from Mr. Electrico.

159.24–25 Madame Schumann-Heink] The Austrian-born concert singer spent most of her career in the United States. Bradbury heard her sing during his evenings ushering at the Hollywood Bowl in 1940 or 1941. The editors of the British Argosy reprint of the story changed the name of the singer to Clara Butt, much better known to their London readers.

159.33–34 I'm too old to be made love at.] Bradbury's "Death and the Maiden" (1960) offers a far more explicit image of death as a courting suitor, using love and enticement to convey an alluring sense of Eternity.

160.27 "I have no intention of coming again. Never."] This double entendre works through Death's supreme certainty about Aunt Tildy's situation, and sets up the story's sequence of events and suspense.

18. The Trunk Lady

169.5 Menlo] His name, and indeed the child's genius for trouble and triumph, may be a play on Thomas Edison, who was known as the Wizard of Menlo Park.

169.29–30 Attics are places for things neglected and forgotten.] The magical qualities of a cluttered attic resurface often in Bradbury's imagination. Another boy's attempt to restore (or join) his long-dead parents across the barriers of time and mortality in "Reunion" (selection 13) is more typical of the time-traveling possibilities of an attic that Bradbury would explore in "A Scent of Sarsaparilla" (1953) and "Autumn Afternoon" (1947; published 2007). Attics can also become no-exit situations, as in "Zero Hour" (1947) and "The Fruit at the Bottom of the Bowl" ("Touch and Go," 1948).

174.11 radio-phonograph] An expensive single-component precursor to the hi-fi console of the 1950s.

183.23 He thought the baby was a murderer.] Bradbury had recently explored this pathology in the character of Leiber, the father of "The Small Assassin" (volume 1, selection 23).

19. Jack-in-the-Box

186.26 "Isn't it enough your father died that way?] The circumstances of the boy and his mother in "Jack in the Box" somewhat parallels that of Parzival (Sir Percival of Arthurian lore), whose mother, in distress at losing her knight-errant husband, kept her son in isolation to prevent him from becoming a knight like his father. Like Parzival, Bradbury portrays the boy as a Wise Fool—a character well-known to history and folklore—who has a kind heart but remains innocent of the ways of the world and people beyond his confined environment. The mother's full-blown psychosis and the tense psychological edge found in Bradbury's story builds rapidly from this mythological background.

187.41 Picasso ladies and Dali gentlemen] Bradbury's abiding interest in certain periods of Picasso and the surrealism of Dali would lead eventually to "In a Season of Calm Weather" (1957; adapted to film as *Picasso Summer*) and a poem celebrating Dali's moustache ("Lip-Synch: Dali's Dilemma"). By the early 1940s he would have seen images for many of Picasso's women, including *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907) and the more tightly focused *Weeping Woman* (1937). Bradbury was interested in Dali's set designs for ballet, especially *Labyrinth* (1941), as well as his better-known pre-war surrealism; Dali gentlemen might represent any of a number of works, from *Crepuscular Old Man* (1918) to *Ghost of Vermeer* (1934) and *The Metamorphosis of Narcissus* (1937). In "Jack-in-the-Box," these associations lend impact to the boy's sense that such paintings represent the true appearance and inner nature of the human "monsters" of the outside world.

197.32 rim of the World] Bradbury was very familiar with the Rim of the World Drive in the San Bernardino Mountains east of Los Angeles.

20. Where Everything Ends

199.8 Venice by the Sea, California] In September 1947, Bradbury married Marguerite McClure and moved into half of a small bungalow duplex along the beachfront of Venice by the Sea, just west of the Venice Boulevard house where he had lived with his parents since March 1942. He knew this shore community well, including the pier and amusement park, the canal, and the oil derricks that had diminished the European look of the original resort community.

201.6 the Guy] A passing reference to God, imagining him as a cosmic lamplighter, caring for the stars as if they were city night lights.

202.41 Hindu rope climbers] Bradbury's abiding love of magic surfaces in this metaphorical description of the way the unseen murderer seems to enter

and leave the scene of the crime without any visible trail. This particular stage magic act is best known as the "Indian rope trick," written about by John Elbert Wilkie in 1890, but attested much earlier in the trade.

21. "Bang! You're Dead"

211.9 a red orchid] In general, Bradbury found the glorification of war through ripening or blossoming images to indicate a fatal disconnect between values and actions. "It occurred to me in my first year in high school, as Mussolini was bombing Ethiopia, and his son was saying how beautiful it was when the bombs exploded below like flower petals, like blossoms. Everyone hated him for saying that, because people were being destroyed by these "blossoms." So that terrified me, and I thought, "Jesus Christ, the big war is coming," and it came four or five years later" (Eller interviews, Oct. 2004).

213.26 Gagliano River] Bradbury is probably referring to the Garigliano River, where some of the heaviest fighting occurred in central Italy during World War II. The American units in this are were involved in the attack on Monte Cassino and the costly advance to take the German defensive positions along the Gustav Line. News reports of this phase of the Italian campaign would have been Bradbury's primary source for his second Johnny Choir story.

215.10 Tunis] The final German surrender in North Africa occurred near Tunis in May 1943; Johnny Choir's unit would have staged from there for the Sicilian and Italian campaigns.

217.13 rammed more bullets in it] The details of war weaponry were not important to Bradbury, who gathered his background for the Johnny Choir stories primarily from newsprint. Johnny would almost certainly have been carrying a semi-automatic M1 (Gurand) rifle, which loads an eight-bullet clip rather than individual rounds.

218.3–4 wild grapes for the winepresses of war?] Revelation 14:17–20 provides the closest of several allusions that carry forward into the popular Civil War song "Battle Hymn of the Republic," by Julia Ward. Here Bradbury has transformed the song's central metaphor into a terrifying reality.

22. Enter—The Douser (Half-Pint Homicide)

221.7 Schabold] The Schabold twins were close friends of Bradbury's in Waukegan; they shared a passion for magic tricks, and often practiced together and occasionally staged performances (Weller, 49–50).

222.20 Douser waved.] The Douser is actually thumbing his nose at the gangster Schabold; the gesture is made clear by Police Sergeant Palmborg's exclamation: "Take your fingers away from your nose."

222.25–26 each of us carries the seed of our own doom?] Here and again at 228.25–26, the Douser seems to parody the Marxian conviction that Capitalism carries the seeds of its own destruction.

222.35 "Got your draft cards?"] Bradbury was himself arrested for not carrying his draft deferment paperwork in late December 1943. he had recently lost his card, and spent the New Year holiday weekend in the Central Jail. A full account of this ordeal appears in Weller, 116-18.

223.7–8 barrage balloon] Bradbury's first attempt at a radio play was a short script on barrage balloons, written in 1943 for the Los Angeles Red Cross publicity director; he wrote blood drive appeals for local radio and newsprint during this period, but the barrage balloon radio plug never reached the air.

223.36 ping-pong] Bradbury used the well-known Parker Brothers' trademark name to frame his table tennis metaphor; Douser's head rebounded off of the windshield like the hollow celluloid playing ball leaves the rubber-coated paddle.

224.20–21 your pint-sized machinery.] The gangster Schabold's desire to put a bullet into the Douser's pint-sized anatomy provided the image for the published title, which was probably editorially imposed.

225.1 blackmarket gas] A reference to wartime gasoline rationing, which attracted organized crime.

225.12 Schabold slid heavily after,] This was an era of bench seats and wide floor space in automobiles; a driver often exited from the passenger's curbside door when parallel parked on a busy street. In spite of his girth, Schabold would have had no trouble following Douser out of the passenger door. Later, he tries to escape Douser's tormenting taunts the same way: "Schabold fell heavily out the opposite side of the car. Douser scrambled after."

227.17 Venice Amusement Pier] A popular Venice Beach attraction that fell into disuse after the Second World War; the ruins of the roller coaster, noted in Leigh Brackett's fiction, became one of the inspirations for "The Fog Horn" ("The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms," 1951).

23. Rocket Skin

229.21 bulger helmet] The bulger helmet mentioned at several points in the story (including "Vapor-jar") was a typical design element of the bulger suits used in science fiction art until the actual flexible suits used by early astronauts displaced them from the American imagination. See also the annotations for "The Calculator" (selection 8).

233.34 black nuns of space] The description of cosmic benediction is consistent with Bradbury's sense of the profound mysteries of the universe. He would come to believe that Mankind would never unlock these mysteries, but his use of similar metaphors—extended into a powerful analogy—would form the core of his O. Henry Award-winning story "Powerhouse" (1947).

237.12–13 My sun was a Christmas tree ornament way up on the top of the great branches of space,] The wistful reflections of some of Leigh Brackett's isolated space rogues influences this character's yearning for the distant sun, but the metaphor radiated out into later Bradbury tales. Bradbury's "The Gift" (Esquire, Dec. 1952) develops this star field metaphor into a story of a child's first Christmas in space. The yearning for the sun becomes a Promethean fable in "The Golden Apples of the Sun," the title story of Bradbury's enduring 1953 story collection.

24. The Forgotten Man ("It Burns Me Up!")

243.2 the *Tribune*] This periodical was not a William Randolph Hearst paper, unless the story is set in Chicago. From 1938 until 1942 Bradbury himself sold papers for the *Los Angeles Herald and Express*, which was a Hearst paper, and this experience may account for the play on "H. J. Randolph" as owner.

243.2–3 H. J. Randolph] The *Tribune*'s owner named here may be a play on William Randolph Hearst; Although there is no reaction by other characters in the story, the irony of a school connection between the powerful multimillionaire Hearst and a tough cop is probably intentional.

243.20 "Hotsy-totsy.] Bradbury learned to read from comic strips around 1925, and he knew almost every syndicated strip from that point on through the 1930s. He would have picked up this term from the strips of Billy DeBeck (1892–1942), who originated Barney Google and Snuffy Smith.

243.37 pot-beer] The sense is one of weakness; pot-beer is a winter or shank brew that is weaker than summer-brewed beer. The term is an unusual one for Bradbury, but it does not appear in Hartrampf's Vocabulary, in earlier years his usual source for unusual comparisons.

243.38 Philo Vance] Bradbury may or may not have read the S. S. Van Dine series of novels centering on the private detective Philo Vance, but he had enjoyed the William Powell characterizations of Vance in four Paramount films as well as others produced by different studios with different stars. As Mrs. Mcleod implies, Carltom the reporter resembles Vance far more than the story's detective.

247.21 Sanka] An inexpensive brand of instant, decaffeinated coffee; in the story context, this allusion adds to the contrast between refined and common cultural references, and accentuates the distinction between the deceased narrator's wealth and culture, and the common origins and sinister aspirations of his widow.

247.24 White Log] As a teenager during the late 1930s, Bradbury often sought film star autographs in front of O'Blath's Café; he was unable to afford the 25- and 50-cent selections within, and usually headed a few doors down to the White Log Cabin Café on S. Hill Street for a nickel malt.

25. The Jar

249.1 one of those things they keep in a jar] Shortly after his family moved to Los Angeles, the fourteen-year-old Bradbury encountered the imaginative source of "The Jar": "In Ocean Park, sometime in the summer of '34 or '35, they had a whole series of exhibits with a big question mark in front of the entrance. You could go in free (I had no money), so I wandered in this exhibit. There's a whole bunch of jars there, one had some drowned kittens in it, a puppy dog, and then some other weird shapes, I didn't know what they were. They were fetuses, but at various stages of development. A couple of weeks, a month, two months, three months, and then eight months, almost a fully grown baby. And I suddenly realized, I was looking at the history of mankind. The whole thing chilled me . . . I knew nothing of life." From the Albright–Bradbury interviews, 1999; first published in the limited press edition of *Dark Carnival* (Colorado Springs, CO: Gauntlet, 2001), 43.

255.31 Mrs. Tridden.] In all likelihood this is another name from Bradbury's life encounters, perhaps during his early years in Waukegan; "Mr. Tridden" would become the streetcar conductor in "The Trolley" (1955), eventually extracted from the Green Town novel (*Farewell Summer*) to become an untitled story-chapter of *Dandelion Wine* (1957).

255.35 Foley,] Foley appears to be another name from Bradbury's Waukegan childhood. "Mrs. Foley" became the reclusive and doomed school teacher of *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. The early fragments of his Illinois Green

Town novels date to the mid-1940s, and it would be a small leap from the more southern Sea Cove and Cape City characters of "The Jar" to the residents of his larger and more enduring Midwestern town.

256.26 feke] With allowances for dialect in this story, "feke" could stand as a variant spelling of "fake." In context, it could also mean a trick, or the mechanics behind how a trick was done.

257.8 gimmle] In context, the term refers to an intended diversion or distraction, perhaps a corruption of "gemmelsmerch," the power of an object, person, or event to distract one from a purpose.

257.20 certain star coveys] The use of "coveys" in describing a stellar grouping, or the looser relationships of mythological constellations, is unusual, and may represent one of his last dips into *Hartrampf's Vocabulary*. This comprehensive volume, with its thousands of synonym and antonym associations radiating out of a few hundred carefully chosen word groups, had been an essential reference for him since high school (in 1939, he had carried it with him on the bus all the way from Los Angeles to the first world science fiction convention in New York, and back again). The word group for assemblage and fellowship lists "covey," but does not seem to provide the intended connotation. It's more likely he searched the word group for breeding, begetting, and seeding, where "covey" is listed under "Offspring (non-human, plural)." By retracing his probable path through Hartrampf's, one can pinpoint his precise intention for tight groupings of stars that share a common nebular origin, rather than the more subjective and scattered formation of a constellation. In reading the thirteen synonym suggestions in this sub-category, he may have locked in on "covey" because he was aware of the word in a cultural context, and would soon use it in his correspondence to refer to the Ballet Russe dancers who toured and founded schools in America during the war (Bradbury to Kuttner, unsent draft, Dec. 25, 1944).

TEXTUAL RECORD

TEXTUAL COMMENTARY

The deeply interwoven roles of storyteller and truthseeker formed the great creative core of Ray Bradbury's seven-decade writing career. His many successful forays into other forms of writing and media adaptation almost invariably radiated out from the enduring armature provided by the nearly 450 distinct short stories that he published during his long and productive life. Ironically, the individual story texts themselves proved far less stable over time; many of his pulp and major market magazine stories were revised or completely rewritten and republished, sometimes under different titles, in more than two dozen carefully crafted story collections. Others were revised and bridged into novels and novelized story cycles such as *The Martian Chronicles* (1950), *Dandelion Wine* (1957), *Green Shadows, White Whale* (1991), *From the Dust Returned* (2000), and *Farewell Summer* (2007). In three retrospective compilations—*The Vintage Bradbury* (1965), *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* (1980), and *Bradbury Stories* (2003), all still in print—he cast successively wider nets in order to gather more than 200 stories that he considered broadly representative of his best work.

His novels, along with his many stage, cinema, radio, and television story adaptations, sometimes obscure the underlying reality: his achievements as a creative writer derived in large measure from his early mastery of the short story form. Throughout his career, he took great care to showcase his subsequent intentions for the early stories as he gathered many—and excluded others—to fashion his periodic story collections and definitive compilations. His tendency to revise and even rewrite for these collections further obscures the key to understanding his maturing creativity: *the date of composition—and the sequenced order of composition—for the individual stories.* Each original story represents an upwelling of ideas and associations from his unconscious, triggering a creative burst that sometimes led to variations on the same themes and topics in other stories composed during a single concentrated period of days or weeks or months. Even the dates of first publication (usually in periodicals) mask the order and chronology of composition, for many of his stories had long circulation histories before reaching print; others never made it into magazines and first appeared—often years or even decades later—in Bradbury's story collections.

When brought to light, the true compositional order of Bradbury's stories yields significant new information about his development as a unique stylist and master of short fiction. One finds that many of the stories that he brought together in his mid- and late-career collections were written in the 1940s or early 1950s—some published only in elusive genre magazines, others not previously published at all. Many of his genre magazine sales of the 1940s could have reached broader magazine markets, and Bradbury included the best of these in his collections; but he left many others uncollected, and only a few of these bypassed tales have appeared in multiple-author anthologies. Even the best of his genre stories were actually written far earlier than previously known, a discovery that provides more accurate documentation for the incredibly brief span of years during which Bradbury developed from a promising but inconsistent and self-conscious young writer into a masterful teller of fantasy, science fiction, and horror tales. By recovering the true compositional sequence of all these stories and studying them within the far broader context of the many surviving (or lost but identifiable) Bradbury stories that never reached print, it becomes possible to trace his evolution as a storywriter and to identify his earliest awareness of the potential for sustained novel-length fiction in genres where the short story and the serialized novella were still the primary forms of authorship.

But the most important task of *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury* series is to present the chronological sequence of stories through reliable texts that reflect Bradbury's earliest settled intention for each tale. The following section of the "Textual Commentary" describes the theory and method of critical editing used to (1) identify, edit, and document the earliest form of each story and (2) provide a record of the subsequent history of each text as Bradbury's authorial intentions changed over time. The commentary concludes with an overview of Bradbury's agent, editor, and publisher relationships during the period covered by the volume, and this discussion will lead into the short textual essays and apparatus documentation for each story.

Textual Principles and Procedures

The volumes of *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury* present a critical edition of Bradbury's published short fiction, presented for the first time in the chronological order of composition. The edition is "critical" because it is based on the identification and examination of the versions of each story over which Bradbury may have exercised at least some degree of authorial control. The *Collected Stories* editors collate (compare) Bradbury's known typescripts (he composed almost exclusively at the typewriter), his serial printings, and all Bradbury story collections, retrospective compilations, as well as novels or novelized story cycles containing the published stories of the volume period.

During the process, the editors also identify and record all variant readings. For the stories that Bradbury brought into book-length collections, all true editions (distinct typesettings) are also collated, along with any known galleys or page proofs. Since successive printings (also known as impressions) within an edition may have been revised or corrected by Bradbury, the final impression is collated against the first; if variants surface, the intermediate impressions are examined to pinpoint the date of introduction and to determine whether the variation is editorial or authorial. This systematic recording of the variant textual history leads to the essence of critical editing: the exercise of editorial judgment in classifying the variants and establishing the text that best reflects the author's intention at a specific period in each story's publishing life.

Bradbury established his final intentions for his stories through a lifetime of reconfigurations. This summative process is a form of textual autobiography, reflecting the author's highly subjective backward glance from one or more vantage points further along the corridors of time.[1] But the author's first submitted typescript—the form first circulated by Bradbury or his agent during the volume period—represents the desired form of the text for the critical edition series. In the case of volume 2 stories such as "The Shape of Things" ("Tomorrow's Child"), serial sales came years after initial circulation, and only after significant revision. In such cases, the earliest circulating form is still the ideal starting point (if it survives), for it represents Bradbury's first settled intention, closest in time to his composing hand.

To be sure, the further evolution of the author's text is crucial to understanding a writer like Bradbury, and the volume apparatus contains a full record of his later substantive revisions. Bradbury's rich and often masterful process of refashioning his *oeuvre* made him one of the most recognizable names in modern American culture, and in many ways his legacy rests with his perennially popular collections, his novels, and the multimedia adaptations they have inspired. But his literary legacy also depends on recovering his creative origins and early development as an author, and *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury* series is designed to recover, document, and preserve the early versions as historical artifact, worthy of study by all who wish to discover the making of a master storyteller.

Selecting and Emending the Copy-Text

The critical edition is based on a clear-text presentation of Bradbury's published stories in chronological order of composition. The selection of the copy-text for each story—the form of the text serving as the basis for the critical edition—follows Sir Walter W. Greg's copy-text rationale, as modified for nineteenth- and twentieth-century literary authors by Fredson Bowers and G. Thomas Tanselle.[2]

As Greg and others have pointed out, the concept of the copy-text is a pragmatic rationale that can be applied to multiple-text situations, such as we find with the vast majority of Bradbury's stories. Greg offers two classifications of textual variants: substantives (variants in words, phrases, or larger continuous blocks of text), and accidentals (isolated variants in spelling, punctuation, case, word division, and marks of emphasis). Paragraphing, depending on the impact it has on the text, may be considered either an accidental or a substantive variant; given the large amount of editorial imposition and authorial revision found in Bradbury's texts, variations in paragraphing are regarded as substantives. Variants in number (singular or plural forms), verb tense, and the use of the possessive apostrophe all change meaning and are also regarded as substantives.

The copy-text is the most authoritative source for accidentals. In reading stages of presswork, authors pay varying degrees of attention to proofing spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, or such meaningful font characteristics as italics. Bradbury almost always read galleys and page proofs for his books but rarely (if ever) had the chance to read copy for his magazine appearances. In the absence of marked-up presswork, the cryptic nature of accidentals makes it even more difficult to distinguish changes made by intermediaries (primarily compositors or editors). For periodicals, and especially for the genre periodicals that published most of Bradbury's early stories, the short turnaround time from typesetting to market release kept editorial proofing to a minimum. Unless there is external (or strong internal) evidence to the contrary, the copy-text should be the version closest to the author's unmediated hand—ideally, the author's submitted manuscript or typescript that was used as setting copy. When none of the authorial or presswork stages have been located (and this is usually the case with Bradbury's initial magazine appearances), the first magazine (serial) printing stands as the copy-text, for it is closer to Bradbury's initial intention than any subsequent form.

The copy-text, therefore, provides the basis for the punctuation, spelling, and words of the literary work. All accidental variants found in later forms of the text must be assumed to be editorial corruptions or stylings unless there is supportable evidence that they represent the work of Bradbury's revising hand. Accidentals found in magazine reprints or in Bradbury's subsequent story collections will be rejected, except on the occasions where the variant corrects an obvious error in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization. Where such errors were never corrected in subsequent publications, or where no subsequent publications exist, the present editors emend the readings and record the emendations in the backmatter emendation lists, using the siglum (symbol) of the critical edition, CE. Such emendations correct only unacceptable errors; Bradbury's discernible preferences in spelling, as well as his habit of creating strings of hyphenated word compounds, are not emended. Unfortunately, most copy-texts will be first

magazine printings, which may already have undergone some degree of house styling. On occasion, Bradbury's preferences can be documented in pre- or post-copy-text typescript fragments or from his large body of surviving unpublished story manuscripts of the volume period. In the rare situations where a strong Bradbury spelling or punctuation preference appears to be styled away in the copy-text, Bradbury's preference is restored by emendation. All emendations are recorded in the emendations list included in the apparatus for each story. Discussions of difficult passages, whether emended or retained, appear in the textual notes found within each apparatus section.

In many critical editions, presenting the author's final intention is the goal, and so revisions and corrections in later (magazine and book) stages of publication that can be reliably determined to be authorial would be emended into the copy-text. However, the goal of the present critical edition is to establish a text that best reflects the author's intention for *initial* publication; in this way, each story in the chronological presentation of *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury* stands as an exemplar of Bradbury's development as a published author at that particular moment in time. Bradbury's typescript errors transmitted into the first published form, as well as the almost inevitable compositorial typesetting corruptions, are not generally distinguishable in the absence of the submitted typescript, but all discernible errors of this kind are corrected by emendation, since such emendations reflect Bradbury's obvious intention. But his subsequent stages of substantive revision found in his story collections and novelizations represent entirely different intentions that will not be emended into the copy-texts of the critical edition.

Although the final stages of revision are manifest in the Bradbury collections, retrospectives, and novels that remain in print today, many of the intermediate stages (such as those in *Dark Carnival*, his first story collection) are not readily available, and the earliest magazine reprintings of the texts are rarely available at all outside of academic libraries and specialized research archives. Most of these progressive stages of publication, which often include revisions and corrections, had never been fully studied until the *Collected Stories* editors began to prepare the historical collations for the critical edition. Although the texts of the present edition consistently reflect the first-publication versions, the textual apparatus for each story includes a historical record of the substantive variants as they were introduced down through successive forms of the text. In this way, students of Bradbury's evolving creativity can read the original forms and use the apparatus to see the substantive post-copy-text revisions.

In four cases, however ("The Emissary," "The Man Upstairs," "There Was an Old Woman," and "Jack-in-the-Box"), Bradbury completely rewrote the original versions in 1954–55 to showcase his best 1940s weird tales for *The October Country*. "The Night," completely rewritten to form an untitled chapter in his 1957

novelized story cycle *Dandelion Wine*, is also a distinctly separate work from the original story presented here. These rewritten forms, which represent completely different intentions, are so divergent that they cannot be represented in the historical collations of the original stories. They are, however, widely available in print today, and can be compared in more general ways to their seldom-seen early versions and the subsequent layers of revision presented in this volume.

Establishing the Date Chronology of the Stories

The publication history of Bradbury's stories (through 2003) can be found in the year-by-year listing in Appendix A of Eller and Touponce, *Ray Bradbury: The Life of Fiction* (2004) 439–503; anthology publications are included, although only the first textbook appearance of each story is noted. A broader history of Bradbury's stories is documented in "Ray Bradbury: Adaptations in Other Media," an indexed listing in *The New Ray Bradbury Review* 1 (2008): 178–220. These are the most accessible comprehensive sources; they radiate out from the unpublished *October's Friend*, a bibliographical finding list for the Albright Collection prepared by Jim Welsh and Professor Donn Albright of the Pratt Institute. For nearly forty years, Albright has been Bradbury's principal bibliographer and the foremost collector of all publications and materials associated with Bradbury's life and career.

Accurate records of this sort provide a useful starting point through the bewildering maze of Bradbury's publishing world, but even with these tools the completion dates and compositional sequence of Bradbury's short stories remain in almost total darkness. Surviving typescripts of some of the published stories, preserved in a few institutional and private collections, offer a fragmentary glimpse of the stages leading up to first publication and, very rarely, of the stages leading up to serial reprintings or to appearances in Bradbury collections. Some, but not many, include notational dates of composition and revision. But the broad underlayment of Bradbury's compositional history survives in the large body of unpublished short fiction preserved in the Albright Collection along with thousands of pages of unpublished fragments. More than 230 of the unpublished stories are identified in appendix B of *Ray Bradbury: The Life of Fiction*, but further discoveries and the subsequent publication of more than two dozen of these stories in recent Bradbury trade and limited collections has outdated this reference to some degree. The unpublished stories themselves (or their folders) occasionally contain dates of composition, but not consistently enough to recover the missing sequence of composition. Bradbury's focused ability to write a story a week or more during the first decade of his professional career resulted in an incredible record of productivity, but the creative continuity of his early career cannot be recovered from the stories alone.

However, a half-dozen closely related composition and publishing records do survive in the Albright Collection, and together with known correspondence related to Bradbury's stories—from his agents, editors, publishers, and the few fellow writers who from time to time served as mentors or confidants—they can be used to recover the true progression of his creativity. The earliest of these is a typed single-leaf list of stories drafted or in progress during the summer after Bradbury graduated from high school. The thirty-two story titles are undated, but most are identifiable; the few that were already published in amateur fanzine publications are so indicated; others subsequently published in fanzines are not annotated as published, suggesting he typed the list in July or or August 1938. This list, fully described in volume 1's "Textual Commentary," provides dating information for many of the amateur pieces included in that volume.

In early 1942 Bradbury began keeping a composition and submission log of sorts. It does not include his first three professional sales, which were made between July and December 1941. The seven extant pages are complete but are heavily damaged and yellowed; nevertheless, they contain a fairly readable series of typed entries for stories composed from January 1942 through July 1945. The final two pages contain an overlapping log of "Special Submissions" running from March through August 1945, documenting the stories he was beginning to submit—on his own and in rapid-fire fashion—to the major market magazines. From 1944 on, his typed running header indicates that the log included submission dates rather than completion dates, but this distinction has little effect on the recovery of the chronology. During his early professional years, he would usually rush through an initial draft in the first blaze of creative insight, never stopping to let his rational mind take control until he was finished. He would revise over the next few days, and unless a story became problematic he would mail it cross-country to Julius Schwartz, his first agent, in New York within five to seven days of the first draft. In other words, the completion date and the submission date were often one and the same, a characteristic that gives the composition and submission log a high degree of consistency as a chronological source. Generally speaking, submission-to-market time was also only a matter of a few days; the coast-to-coast deliveries of Bradbury's stories usually took no more than two days, and Schwartz was only blocks away from the editors he had worked with for years.

Bradbury kept a parallel record of sales that is slightly older. This document begins with the three stories he sold in 1941 and continues on through ten leaves (rectos only) to document his sales through 1949. Once again, the highly acidic leaves are yellowed and moderately damaged, but the typed record is more or less continuous and inclusive. Dating becomes intermittent on the 1948 and 1949 pages, but by this time his incoming editorial correspondence and surviving letters from Don Congdon, who became his representative in all markets during

September 1947, provide most of the missing dates. These two key documents—Bradbury's composition and submission log and his sales record—are closely related, and together they stand as the primary documents used in establishing the composition sequence for all the published stories as well as many of the unpublished stories that Bradbury wrote during World War II.

In January 1943 Bradbury began to keep a sales-by-publisher index. His first index is only a single typed page, with additional sales carried only through March 1943. His first eleven sales entries are undated, but the document itself can be dated by cross-referencing its contents with the dates of sales within the cumulative sales log. At some point—the final entries, the paper, and the typeface all suggest circa 1950—Bradbury prepared an expanded sales-by-publisher index with separate sequences for each of the publishing syndicates where he had sold stories: Popular; Fiction House; Story Inc. (publishers of *Weird Tales*); Fictioneers Inc. (Popular's subsidiary syndicate); Ziff-Davis; and Street & Smith. His first nine sales to major market and academic periodicals, completed on his own before engaging Congdon to represent him, conclude the last page of pulp syndicate entries. It is followed by a single-page index of his first eleven major market and academic sales through March 1948. Each entry includes publication dates and what appears to be a rough recall of the sale payment. There is also a column for rights on every page; the first page notes that all rights were sold with the stories appearing in Standard Magazine's titles (*Thrilling Wonder Stories* and *Startling Stories*) but question mark placeholders in all the other syndicates' rights columns indicate that Bradbury had questions about these matters. Bradbury would not like the answers, however; by 1950, he and Don Congdon began to realize that Schwartz had initially sold all rights to the pulp magazine stories, which made it difficult to reprint some of the stories in major market magazines (or even to adapt them for other media). In many cases, the subsequent rights buyout ended up being far greater than the penny-a-word rates (or less) that the syndicates had originally paid for the stories.

The payment listings in the extended sales-by-publisher index appear to come from Bradbury's typed and holograph annotations in the 1941–49 sales log. In both documents, the payment amounts may have been recorded from memory. The best source of sales payments appears to be his listing of sales negotiated by Schwartz. It contains all seventy stories that Schwartz sold for Bradbury, concluding with the January 1948 *Weird Tales* payment for "The Black Ferris." The Schwartz listing was prepared around 1950 by William F. Nolan, who became Bradbury's first bibliographer around that time, roughly two years before setting out on his own professional writing career. The three-page typescript bears an opening page title and data headings in Nolan's hand. It contains a few typographical errors, but the payments listed agree with the amounts quoted in Schwartz's postcards and letters to Bradbury at the time

of sale. The pre-commission payments given in the critical edition are based on this source; payment variations in Bradbury's other record documents are always minor and are given in each story's apparatus head note essay.

The last (but only recently unearthed) chronology survives within a metal notecard file box discovered in 2010, shortly after volume 1 went to press. The box contains individual notecards dating back to Bradbury's first story sales in 1941; cards for 1941 and early 1942 are place holders, suggesting that the file was actually started later in 1942. Most cards provide a date of submission for circulation, and subsequent dates for rejections and re-submissions. This file is the most comprehensive record of Bradbury's short fiction, and continues through the mid-1970s.

Producing the Critical Edition

Establishing the genealogy for Bradbury's early stories begins with careful study of the seven composition and sales documents already described, and continues on through the study of the published and unpublished bibliographical sources to verify the initial publication dates and venues for each story. The known correspondence between Bradbury and his agents, editors, publishers, and other writers of the period further confirms and extends the data in Bradbury's surviving composition and sales records. At this point, the chronology of story composition can be established, and the volume contents can be identified and sequenced. Attention now turns to finding all relevant forms of the text that may survive. Existing typescript stages and prepublication presswork are located and photocopies are secured. All published forms of each story are identified and copies of relevant forms—those over which Bradbury may have exercised authorial control—are acquired in original or photocopy form. Although Bradbury generally allowed his agents to handle all aspects involving serial reprints, these forms are also gathered for collation along with all editions of the relevant Bradbury story collections.

Bradbury had no control over anthology and textbook appearances beyond the point of sale and generally took little interest in them as textual artifacts. He expected all editors to publish his stories accurately and in their entirety; in a few cases he disputed unauthorized editorial variations or abridgments. Such cases are rare and none affect texts in this volume. But the significant variant histories found in magazine reprints and in Bradbury's revisions for his story collections sometimes resurface in anthologies and textbooks; the anthologized forms are not included in the word-for-word collation schedule, but they are listed in the story's headnote.

Once the copy-text representing Bradbury's earliest surviving intention is identified for each story, the process of producing a copy-text transcription

begins. For magazine copy-texts, editorial teasers—one or two-sentence paraphrases from the story text inserted below or above the title line to catch the attention of bookstore or newsstand browsers—are not transcribed, but they are described in the selection's textual notes. For all stories, the transcriber initially works from a photocopy of the copy-text, keyboarding a full literal transcription file; the transcriber then conducts an initial proofreading and correction in isolation prior to producing a printout and entering the transcription into the perfection process. A team of two editors takes the initial transcription printout through a vocal proofreading, marking any errors in the literal transcription for correction. The file is corrected electronically and reprinted before being team-checked to ensure that the corrections were entered properly without corrupting other points of the transcription. If any errors remain, the printout is corrected, reprinted, and checked until it is ready to stand as the corrected transcription.

The editors then read the corrected transcription against the actual copy-text, using the original publications or typescripts located in the Center for Ray Bradbury Studies or the Albright Collection. Any errors caused by photocopy limitations are noted and marked on the corrected transcription. At this point the copy-text transcription is considered "perfected"; this term does not indicate conventional correctness but rather that a transcription has been rendered—as far as humanly possible—to reflect the exact reading of the copy-text source, including any errors that the original itself contains. The perfected transcription is now ready for the editing phase, and at this point, collations of the later forms of the text come into play.

In fact, variations in the post-copy-text forms can play a role in determining whether a reading should be emended in the process of fully restoring the author's initial intention for the text. This is crucial in the case of Bradbury's early published stories, where very few of his submitted typescripts are known to survive and where pulp magazine compositors and editors—working with small budgets and tight deadlines—sometimes introduced a significant number of errors. Serial reprintings (especially in the reset Canadian issues of *Weird Tales* and *Super Science Stories*) inevitably add a new layer of compositorial corruption, but they also often correct typographical errors found in the originals and become a source (but not an authority) for emendation decisions. In some instances, collation will reveal that the first and second serial forms were both set from Bradbury's submitted typescript; this usually happened in the Canadian reprints, which sometimes contain text silently omitted from initial American serialization due to space limitations. Bradbury's own revisions for his subsequent collections also include corrections to readings where the error might not be apparent to editors working solely with the first published form of the text. In this respect, post-copy-text variants are extremely useful in turning the preliminary list of emendations into the final volume apparatus form.

The collation process is equally important in building the historical record of post-copy-text substantive variations included in the apparatus for many of the volume's story selections. In each case, sight collations are performed and recorded for forms of the text in the vertical line of descent (that is, for each distinct typesetting down through time). The collation process for each story involves reading the standard of collation (the earliest surviving form) against the successive serial or book typesettings.[3] Since Bradbury developed working relationships with his British publishers and was sometimes involved with transatlantic proofreading, the sight-collation process includes the reset British editions (or distinct British collections) that contain versions of the stories in this volume. A different member of the editorial staff checks each sight collation to ensure accuracy. One characteristic of the author's creativity led to a modification of the sight-collation methodology: the deep revisions that Bradbury made in collecting stories for *Dark Carnival* made it necessary to perform two sequences of collation for these selections. The first serial publication served as the standard of collation against *Dark Carnival* and any serial reprintings that descend directly from the first serialization. *The Dark Carnival* text then became the standard of collation against editions of *The October Country*, subsequent Bradbury collections, and serial reprintings that descend from the heavy layer of revisions found in *Dark Carnival.*[4]

Machine collation allows a comparison of successive printings within a single typesetting of Bradbury's story collections. In this way the "horizontal" progression across the various reimpressions and reissues of a single typesetting can be expeditiously examined to determine if there are any hidden states of variation, for each successive impression may contain authorial or editorial corrections as well as line shifts across pages or even unintentional line drops and transpositions. For these reasons, the first and last impressions of each successive Ballantine edition of *The October Country* have been machine collated on a Lindstrand Comparator to determine if any impressions introduce variant states of the texts in question. The same process was repeated for other Bradbury collections with multiple impressions; since "The Million Year Picnic" became the final chapter of *The Martian Chronicles*, successive impressions within the various *Chronicles* editions were also machine collated. Any accidental or substantive variants discovered as a result of the machine collation were then combined with the sight collation record to form the full historical collation of variants for every story included in the present volume. This collation is maintained in the Center for Ray Bradbury Studies at Indiana University. The substantive variants are extracted from the full historical collation to create the listing of post-copy-text substantives found in the apparatus for each story in the present volume.

With a full post-copy-text history of variants now in hand, the textual editor marks up the perfected copy-text transcription of each story for emendation

according to the conservative guidelines summarized in earlier sections of the "Textual Commentary." The emendations are then entered into the electronic file along with the correction of any final "perfection" errors discovered and marked while proofing the corrected transcription against the copy-text originals at archive. An "edited" copy of the transcription is printed out and members of the editorial team check this printout against the markup. Further corrections and printouts are checked as necessary for each story until all the volume selections are fully corrected as edited. At this point, the transcription files are consolidated with the front- and backmatter files and the preliminary formatting tags are checked for consistency by the production and transcription team before submission of the book file to The Kent State University Press for layout. Since the volume represents a critically-established text with apparatus, the staff editors receive proofs back from the press in order to check for textual stability and to key actual page-and-line numbers into the apparatus lists, the textual notes, and the content annotations. During this phase the editorial team performs a final word-for-word proofreading of the Bradbury texts against the marked-up editing copy to ensure that the words and punctuation remain as established for the critical edition. The Press then lays out the keyed backmatter, and the editorial staff checks backmatter proofs. After a final check of post-layout corrections against blues, the volume is ready for publication.

The Contents and Structure of the Critical Edition

Volume 2 of *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury* includes twenty-five stories that eventually sold and reached publication. All were written between April 1943 and March 1944. In some cases, publication came years or even decades later, but the volume sequence is based on the order of composition. The story selections lead into Appendix A— the "Chronological Catalog" of the period covered by this volume. The chronology appears in two vertical columns of data covering all of 1943 and 1944, thereby providing a broader chronological context for the volume period. The left-hand column offers a listing of Bradbury's published fiction in the order of publication, presenting his stories in the sequence by which they were encountered by the reading public. The right-hand column provides a full sequence of all known Bradbury stories of these years, published and unpublished, arranged in chronological order of composition. This listing reflects the chronological underpinnings of the entire critical edition series and documents all that is known about the circulation history of the unpublished stories. The chronology for Bradbury's earliest known fiction (1935 to April 1943) appeared in volume 1; subsequent volumes in the series will continue this time line of creativity through the 1940s.

Appendix B reveals another historical dimension of Bradbury's development—a detailed sequence of content summaries for the unpublished pieces that are known to survive from 1944. Volume 1 provided summaries of unpublished stories written through 1943; volume 3 will include summaries for 1945. A detailed series of content annotations to all the published story texts, keyed to page and line numbers of the present edition, follows the appendices.

Editorial decisions concerning the texts, discussions of editorial cruxes, and relevant historical information appear in twenty-five self-contained apparatus sections, one for each of the volume's story selections. Each apparatus section begins with a narrative headnote that pinpoints (as closely as possible) the story's date of composition, its circulation and sales history, the record of subsequent revision and publication, and the editorial rationale for the copy-text selection. Abbreviations (or sigla) for each form of the text will be identified in the comprehensive headnote essay, which concludes with a list of all sources used to uncover the history of the text and to situate its historical context. Textual notes, describing specific problematic points within the copy-text and any editorial decisions made to retain or emend a problem reading, follow the essay.

A list of emendations follows the textual notes; it records all editorial changes, both accidentals and substantives, made by the present editors in establishing the text of the critical edition. Emendations made for the first time in the critical edition are identified by the siglum CE. Each entry in the list begins with the emended reading to the left of a terminal bracket; a siglum indicating the source of the emended reading appears to the right of the bracket, followed by a semicolon and the original copy-text reading, followed by its siglum. Additional variant readings found in intervening texts published after the copy-text but before the source of the accepted reading appear (followed by their respective sigla) to the right of the original copy-text reading. Any intervening forms not listed may be assumed to agree with the copy-text reading. Character spacing, font size, and drop-capital letters or all-capital words representing story or section openings, are purely visual aspects of the text and are silently regularized without emendation.

For selections where collation reveals substantive variations in subsequent forms of the text, a listing of post-copy-text substantives follows the emendations list. This is the most significant portion of the full historical collation, and it provides valuable insights into the way Bradbury revised certain stories to fulfill subsequent authorial intentions for his work. It also allows us to detect where later typesetters and editors contributed to the transmission of error through subsequent published versions of Bradbury's stories. Each entry in this historical record begins with the copy-text reading to the left of a terminal bracket followed by its siglum and a semicolon. To the right of the semicolon

the successive record of substantive variation appears in chronological order, separated by the respective sigla followed by semicolons. Sometimes Bradbury, over time, embedded successive layers of substantive revision within a single passage; in such cases, the embedded revisions begin with a black diamond symbol and terminate with the bracketed siglum of the embedded revision's source. Unless otherwise indicated in the selection's headnote, any forms not listed in the historical collation may be assumed to agree with the copy-text reading.

Occasionally, words that may be true hyphenated compounds are broken across lines in the copy-text. Such words are listed at the end of a story's apparatus, to the left of a terminal bracket, followed by the resolution of the reading (either as a true hyphenated compound or as a single word). Some compound words will inevitably end up being hyphenated across lines in the present critical edition; a single list at the end of the volume records all such compounds that, if quoted or transcribed from the present text, should retain their hyphens. Any other possible compounds laid out as end-line hyphenations in the present edition should be transcribed as single words.

Bradbury's texts, consistently edited to present his earliest intentions for his fiction as standalone stories, are thus supported by a full apparatus describing the historical transmission of each published story text, identifying the source and extent of every editorial emendation to the copy-text, and presenting (in list form) the subsequent history of substantive variation. The new text, as annotated, documented, and represented in this way, constitutes a critical edition of Bradbury's earliest published fiction.

Overview of the Volume Period: 1943 and 1944

The very private twelve months of creativity covered by this volume run parallel to the very public way that Bradbury's career as a genre writer began to take off. Eleven of his stories reached print in 1943, and nineteen more were published the following year. The hidden underlayment of his creativity was more complex, of course, than this basic record of publication reveals, and years would pass before Bradbury could look back and see the improving ratio of publishable work he was beginning to produce. He actually completed forty-one stories during 1943, and eventually twenty-six of these would reach the pages of the professional genre pulps. During 1944 he completed and sent out forty tales, and twenty-five of these eventually sold. His New York agent, Julius Schwartz, was pivotal in this process, and between 1941 and 1947 he closed seventy pulp sales for Bradbury. Schwartz circulated at least as many stories that did not sell, but the essential point is that he was able to see Bradbury's potential and facilitate Bradbury's success in most of the genre fields of the day—weird, detective, science fiction, and fantasy.

The volume 2 period—April 1943 through March 1944—falls right in the middle of these pivotal years, when Bradbury was gaining popularity as an off-trail talent in the pulps. Many of the new stories he wrote would solidify his place as a regular in *Weird Tales*; others would bring him into the crime pulps. The relatively few science fiction tales written during this period were still somewhat imitative of his friend and mentor Leigh Brackett; some would take years to place, finding success more as a result of Bradbury's revising hand and his growing maturity as a storyteller in the mid- and late 1940s.

For the twenty-five stories that eventually reached print, the textual trail includes tantalizing glimpses of Bradbury's unmediated hand. "The Sea Shell," "Everything Instead of Something" ("Doodad"), "The Ducker," "The Night," "The Million Year Picnic," "Reunion," "The Long Night," "Bang! You're Dead!" and "Rocket Skin" have surviving opening pages; these are all carbons or late discards from the finished stories that he submitted to Schwartz for circulation, apparently retained as evidence of authorship for stories that Bradbury knew might circulate through many hands before selling. These were all typed by the author, and they serve as copy-text in the present edition for the first few hundred words of each story.

Four pages of very preliminary text survive for portions of "Perchance to Dream," an eerie tale of loneliness and isolation on a planetoid where dark phantoms attempt to control the sleeping mind of a marooned Earth man. The pages date all the way back to the spring of 1942, when Bradbury made his first attempt at the story. These fragments represent very early stages of work, and are too distant from the finished story to have any authority in the present edition. However, mature and complete typescripts survive for three of the volume's selections: "The Man Upstairs," a small-town weird tale that eventually found its way to the mainstream readership of *Harper's* magazine; "The Shape of Things," a transdimensional adventure (better known today as "Tomorrow's Child") that sold, six years later, to *Thrilling Wonder Stories*; and "Where Everything Ends," a West Coast crime story that never sold at all. In 2010, Bradbury included the story in an omnibus of his late career detective novels, making "Where Everything Ends" the last tale to reach print from the volume 2 period.

Bradbury's surviving typescripts for these three stories include Julius Schwartz agency cover sheets, and represent Bradbury's settled intention at the time he first submitted them for circulation. They stand as copy-text in the present edition, allowing us to establish the critical text directly from Bradbury's unstyled spellings and punctuation. But most of the stories in volume 2 have no surviving pre-publication materials, and we must rely on the initial periodical publications as copy-text. Seven selections were first published in *Weird Tales*, the oldest of the traditional horror magazines. In order of composition, these include "The Sea Shell," "The Ducker," "The Night," "Reunion," "There Was an Old Woman," "Bang! You're Dead!" and "The Jar." Fortunately,

very little styling was imposed on the *Weird Tales* texts, and Bradbury's own spelling preferences (as well as his inconsistencies) are often discernible, making the few points where emendation is necessary easy to negotiate.

The nostalgic child-centered worlds of "The Night" and "Reunion," as well as the folk-tale grotesques of "There Was an Old Woman" and "The Jar," were revised and showcased in *Dark Carnival*, Bradbury's first story collection. "The Emissary," "The Man Upstairs," and "Jack-in-the-Box" were also brought into *Dark Carnival.* This version represents the earliest surviving form for "The Emissary" and "Jack-in-the-Box," and serves as copy-text for both stories. The post-copy-text revisions that Bradbury made in all of the other *Dark Carnival* stories represent a later intention, and are relegated to the lists of variants included in the apparatus.

Bradbury never returned to "Reunion" again, but he eventually rewrote "The Night" for *Dandelion Wine* (1957); he also rewrote "The Emissary," "The Man Upstairs," "There Was an Old Woman," "Jack-in-the-Box," and "The Jar" for *The October Country* (1955), his final refashioning of his early weird stories. With the exception of "The Jar," these re-writes are so divergent that they represent completely different works from the original tales, and cannot be assimilated into the post-copy-text record of revision. They are all readily available in print today, and can be compared with the far deeper textual record of the *Collected Stories* series.

Five of the six crime stories included in the present volume were successfully circulated among the editors of the various detective magazines sold by Popular Publications. They were not typical of the crime genre; Popular's editors, especially general editor Alden Norton, rejected more Bradbury submissions than they accepted, but they all admired his originality and off-trail surprises. The five Bradbury purchases appeared in *Detective Tales*, *New Detective*, and *Dime Mystery.* Only "The Long Night" retained its submitted title in print; the editorially imposed titles of the others have been relegated (by emendation) to subtitles in the present edition, and Bradbury's intended titles restored.

With the exception of "And Watch the Fountains," a short "liar's tale" special department selection for *Astounding Science Fiction*, and "Doodad," Bradbury's only true story sale to *Astounding*, the science fiction stories from this period eventually fell to the reliable but second-tier genre magazine *Planet Stories* and the far older *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, which entered a renaissance of sorts after the war under the editorship of Sam Merwin, Jr. "Rocket Skin," an undistinguished piece, was the first to reach print in the spring 1946 issue of *Thrilling Wonder Stories. Planet Stories*, now under the editorship of Paul Payne, placed Bradbury's breakthrough Martian tale "The Million Year Picnic" in the summer 1946 issue. It was not until 1948, however, that these two magazines published four long-unsold stories written during the spring of 1943. *Thrilling Wonder* took a rewritten version of "The Shape of Things" and "Refer-

ent"; *Planet Stories* took "The Calculator," an unremarkable Brackett inspired adventure, and "Perchance to Dream," which had the dark understated terror and edginess found in the best of Bradbury's early science fiction. The last two stories had titles that were apparently imposed by *Planet*'s editors; in the present volume, the editorial titles have been relegated to parenthetical subtitles by emendation, and Bradbury's intended titles restored.

Many of these twenty-five stories were reprinted, with varying degrees of accuracy, in a wide range of other magazines; substantive variants, resulting from editorial impositions, abridgement, or typesetting error, are relegated to the lists of post-copy-text substantives in the apparatus. These lists provide more than a record of editorial misadventure, however; they also reveal the fascinating way that Bradbury revised many of these stories over time to fashion more mature presentations of his early work. The stories themselves, restored to seldom-seen original versions, offer a new way of seeing a remarkably creative young writer refining his talents and slowly, through trial and error and sheer force of will, mastering the art of fiction.

Jonathan R. Eller
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Notes

1. In establishing the texts for *The Collected Poems of Robert Penn Warren* (1998), Professor John Burt of Brandeis University was faced with a similar challenge. Although he concentrated on recovering the forms of the poems as first gathered into a Warren collection, his copy-text decisions invariably represented an early settled intention for each poem. Burt suggested that such a process of recovering the author's intentions at earlier career stages is analogous to recovering "an author's diary, representing the author's intellectual life as it unfolded, with no certainty, but with many provisional intuitions, about how each event will fit into the big picture."

2. Sir Walter Greg, "The Rationale of Copy-Text," *Studies in Bibliography* 3 (1950–51): 19–36, reprinted in *The Collected Papers of Sir Walter W. Greg*, ed. J. C. Maxwell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 374–91.

3. The term "standard of collation" has no authoritative significance; it is merely a methodological distinction designed to establish a stable chronological focus for the collation process.

4. The first printing of *The October Country* exhibits yet another layer of heavy revision for some stories, and in these cases, that printing becomes the collation standard for the many subsequent editions published in the United States and the United Kingdom.

EDITORIAL SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Editorial Symbols

Bradbury's stories are presented in a clear-text format. The following symbols and abbreviations appear within the apparatus sections:

Page and line references

The page and line numbers, separated by a period, refer to the present edition. For each story, the title block is not included in the line count; however, extra lines and section breaks are counted. Lines may occasionally contain more than one occurrence of a word; if such a word anchors an apparatus list entry, a parenthetical number follows the line number to indicate which occurrence serves as the lemma anchor. For example, "1.16 (2) amber" would refer to page 1, line 16, and the second occurrence of "amber" in the line.

Also

The term *Also* appears in rejected readings to identify subsequent points in the text that contain the identical variant word or phrase. Plural forms and other suffix endings of a variant word may be identified by the term *similarly.* Such editorial comments will always be presented in italic type.

The Asterisk [*]

An asterisk preceding the page-line number of an emendation or historical collation entry indicates that the reading is discussed in a textual note.

The Lemma Bracket [ ]

The lemma or anchoring text of an apparatus list entry is followed by the closing half of a roman bracket pair.

The Pilcrow [¶]

A pilcrow, or paragraph symbol, used in the lemma or in any other part of an emendation or historical collation entry, indicates a paragraph indention.

The Caret [∧]

A caret, lowered to the base line, indicates an absence of punctuation in a rejected reading. The accepted reading anchoring an entry in the emendations list is presented in clear text.

The Tilde [~]

A wavy dash or tilde in the rejected reading (to the right of the anchoring bracket) represents the same word in the accepted reading (emendations list) or the original copy-text reading (historical collation) to the left of the bracket. The tilde is only used for words where the rejected reading is limited to punctuation or paragraphing.

The Solidus [|]

The vertical line or solidus is used in the rare situations where line breaks in a story title or closing (e.g., "The End") need to be represented in the apparatus lists.

The Black Diamond [◆]

A small black diamond within a large rejected reading indicates that the words following the diamond are part of a further variation from an earlier or later version of the text. Such embedded variants are bounded on the right by a pair of square brackets enclosing the siglum or abbreviation of the embedded variant's source.

The Clear Diamond [◊]

A small clear diamond appears at the beginning of a post-copy-text substantive (in the Historical Collation apparatus lists) when the text of the substantive reading's anchor text does not correspond to the current edition due to an editorial emendation. The diamond alerts the reader that the substantive contains the original reading, while the corresponding emendation entry contains the new, critically edited text.

Bibliographical Abbreviations

Unless otherwise indicated in source citations, letters to and from Bradbury are in the Albright Collection, with photocopies deposited with the Center for Ray Bradbury Studies. The following abbreviations for reference texts are used in the narrative headnotes to identify sources of information used in preparing the headnotes for each story:

Ashley

Ashley, Mike. *The Time Machines.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000.

Carter

Carter, Paul A. *The Creation of Tomorrow: Fifty Years of Magazine Science Fiction.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1977.

Clute and Nicholls

Clute, John, and Peter Nicholls, comp. *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction.* New York: St. Martin's, 1993; update, 1995.

Eller

Eller, Jonathan R. *Becoming Ray Bradbury.* Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011.

Eller and Touponce

Eller, Jonathan R. and William F. Touponce. *Ray Bradbury: The Life of Fiction.* Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2004.

Tymn and Ashley

Tymn, Marshall B. and Mike Ashley, comp. *Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Weird Fiction Magazines.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985.

Weinberg

Weinberg, Robert. *The* Weird Tales *Story.* West Linn, OR: FAX Collector's Editions, Inc., 1977.

Weller

Weller, Sam. *The Bradbury Chronicles.* New York: Morrow, 2005.

Unpublished Interview Abbreviations

Albright-Bradbury interviews [date]

Conducted March 2001 (The *Dark Carnival* interview), March 2003, March 2004, March 2006, April 2008 (*Masks* interview).

Eller-Bradbury interviews [date]

Conducted October 1998, March 2002, October 2002, October 2004, October 2005, October 2006, October 2007, October 2008, April 2009, October 2009, March 2010, October 2010, March 2011, October 2011, March 2012.

Sigla

The following abbreviations or sigla are used to designate the sources of readings in the head-note essays and apparatus lists of the individual story entries:

S A serial (magazine or newspaper) version of a story text; S1 indicates first serial publication, S2 indicates second serial appearance, etc.

TS A typewritten version of a story text; multiple typescript situations are indicated in genealogical order as TS1, TS2, etc.

TSπ A page or pages from preliminary drafts of a story that fall into the category of pre-copy-text materials. The designation pi (π) stands for "preliminary," much as the same symbol identifies the preliminary leaves of a book in bibliographical descriptions.

G A galley stage of presswork with no authorial revisions or corrections.

RG A galley stage of presswork overwritten with a subsequent layer of revisions by the author in holograph or typescript form.

BS *Bradbury Stories* (New York: William Morrow, 2003). Retrospective story compilation. Reissued as book club (hardbound) and as trade paperback. See *RBS*.

CS1 *Classic Stories 1* (New York: Bantam, 1990). Mass-market paperback. Remixed story collection; combines *The Golden Apples of the Sun* (New York: Doubleday, 1953) and *RR* stories in original volume order but deletes seven stories to avoid overlap with each other and with *CS2*. See *GA&OS*.

CS2 *Classic Stories 2* (New York: Bantam, 1990). Mass-market paperback. Remixed story collection; combines *A Medicine for Melancholy* (New York: Doubleday, 1959) and *SS* stories in original volume order but deletes seven stories to avoid overlap with each other and with *CS1*. See *MM&OS*.

DC *Dark Carnival* (Sauk City, WI: Arkham House, 1947). First edition, hardbound. Story collection. Some stories subsequently revised or rewritten for *OC*.

DC^{1948} *Dark Carnival* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1948). Second edition, hardbound. Abridged contents.

DC^{2001} *Dark Carnival* (Colorado Springs, CO: Gauntlet, 2001). Third edition, hardbound. Expanded contents.

DRF *The Day It Rained Forever* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1959). First edition, hardbound.

DRF^{1963} *The Day It Rained Forever* (London: Penguin Books, 1963). Second

edition, mass-market paperback. Reissued as trade paperback by Penguin, 1987.

GA&OS *The Golden Apples of the Sun & Other Stories* (New York: Avon, 1997). A trade-paperback edition of CS1. Reissued by William Morrow as *GA&OS* and as *A Sound of Thunder.*

MC[1950] *The Martian Chronicles* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1950). First edition, hardbound. Novelized story cycle. Fifteen story-chapters with eleven short bridging chapters.

MC[1951] *The Martian Chronicles* (New York: Bantam, 1951). Mass-market paperback edition (two printings). Contents identical to *MC*[1950].

MC[1953] *The Martian Chronicles* (London: Science Fiction Book Club, 1953). Book club hardbound edition. Sixteen story-chapters with eleven short bridging chapters. Contents of *SL*[1951], but adds "May 2003: The Wilderness."

MC[1954] *The Martian Chronicles* (New York: Bantam: 1954). Mass-market paperback edition (94 printings). Contents identical to *MC*[1950].

MC[1963] *The Martian Chronicles* (New York: Time, Inc., 1963). Trade (large format) paperback (Time Reading Program special edition). Seventeen story-chapters and eleven short bridging chapters. Contents of *MC*[1950], but adds "November 2002: The Fire Balloons" and "May 2003: The Wilderness." The first "complete" edition.

MC[1974] *The Martian Chronicles* (Avon, CT: Heritage Press, 1974). Limited hardbound illustrated book club edition. Second issue by Easton Press (1989). Contents identical to *MC*[1950].

MC[1979] *The Martian Chronicles* (Bantam, 1990). Trade (large format) illustrated edition. Contents identical to *MC*[1950].

MC[1990a] *The Martian Chronicles* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1990). Fortieth anniversary hardbound edition. Contents identical to *MC*[1950], but adds "November 2002: The Fire Balloons."

MC[1990b] *The Martian Chronicles* (London: Grafton [HarperCollins] 1990). Mass-market paperback edition; the so-called 8th printing of *SL*[1977] (as identified by "8" on the copyright page). Second issue (London: Flamingo [HarperCollins], 1995) is a trade (large format) paperback (12 printings). Contents identical to *SL*[1951].

MC[1997] *The Martian Chronicles* (New York: Avon, 1997). Small format hardbound (printings 1–6). Reissued by Morrow (printings 7–12). Reissued by Morrow for Book-of-the-Month Club (1 unsequenced printing). Reissued by Morrow (printings 13 and subsequent). Contents of *MC*[1950], but deletes "June 2003: Way in the Middle of the Air" and shifts the dates in the chapter title prefixes a quarter century further into the future.

MC^{2006} *The Martian Chronicles* (New York: Bantam, 2006). Mass-market paperback. printings 95 and subsequent, cumulative from the *MC*^{1954} print count. Contents identical to *MC*^{1950}.

MC^{2008} *The Martian Chronicles* (London: Harper Voyager [HarperCollins], 2008). Trade (large format) paperback. Contents identical to *SL*^{1951}.

MC^{2009} *The Martian Chronicles* (Burton, MI: Subterranean Press / Hornsea, U.K.: PS Publishing, 2009). Limited hardbound edition; subtitled "The Complete Edition." Includes additional Martian tales tangential to the actual *Chronicles*, and two of Bradbury's screenplay adaptations.

MC^{2011} *The Martian Chronicles* (New York: HarperPerennial, 2011). Trade (large format) paperback reissue of *MC*^{1997}.

MC^{2012} *The Martian Chronicles* (New York: Simon & Schuster, [March] 2012). Mass-market paperback. Contents identical to *MC*^{1950}.

MeM *A Memory of Murder* (New York: Dell, 1984). Mass-market paperback. Story collection.

MM&OS *A Medicine for Melancholy & Other Stories* (New York: Avon, 1998). A trade-paperback edition of CS2. Reissued by William Morrow.

OC *The October Country* (New York: Ballantine, 1955). First edition, hardbound, 36 lines per page. Story collection. Reissued hardbound (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1956); reissued as a mass-market paperback with 40 lines per page (New York: Ballantine, 1956); original 36-line page break reissued as a trade paperback (New York: Ballantine, 1996, first three printings), and twice as a mass-market paperback (New York: Ballantine, 1996 and London: Earthlight, 1998).

OC^{1961} *The October Country* (London: Ace, 1961). Second edition, mass-market paperback. Abridged contents. See *SA*.

OC^{1963} *The October Country* (London: Four Square, 1963). Third edition, mass-market paperback. Reissued by New English Library. Abridged contents. See *SA*.

OC^{1970} *The October Country* (New York: Knopf, 1970). Fourth edition, hardbound.

OC^{1976} *The October Country* (London: Panther, 1976). Fifth edition, mass-market paperback. Reissued by Panther/Granada, 1984. Abridged contents. See *SA*.

OC^{1984} *The October Country* (London: Grafton, post-1984). Sixth edition, mass-market paperback. So-called Panther "4th printing." Contains all OC selections.

OC^{1996} *The October Country* (New York: Ballantine, 1996). Seventh edition, trade paperback. So-called fourth ("4") and subsequent printings of the 1996 Ballantine first edition trade paperback (see OC).

OC[1997] *The October Country* (Springfield, PA: Gauntlet). Eighth edition, hardbound.

OC[1999] *The October Country* (New York: Avon, 1999. Ninth edition, hardbound (small format). Reissued by William Morrow.

RB *Ray Bradbury* (London: Harrap, 1975). Trade paperback (single-author textbook anthology).

RBS1 *Ray Bradbury Stories* v. 1 (London: HarperCollins, 2008). Trade paperback retrospective story compilation. A resetting of *SRB*.

RBS2 *Ray Bradbury Stories* v. 2 (London: HarperCollins, 2008). Trade paperback retrospective story compilation. A resetting of *BS*.

RR *R Is for Rocket* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1962). First edition, hardbound. Remixed story collection. Reissued (U.K.) by Rupert Hart-Davis, 1968.

RR[1965] *R Is for Rocket* (New York: Bantam, 1965). Second edition, mass-market paperback. Multiple issues and reprintings.

RR[1972] *R Is for Rocket* (London: Pan, 1972). Third edition, mass-market paperback.

SA[1962] *The Small Assassin* (London: Ace, 1962). First edition, mass-market paperback. Contains seven OC stories deleted from the abridged British Ace paperback (*OC*[1961]).

SA[1976] *The Small Assassin* (London: Grafton, 1976). Second edition, mass-market paperback.

SL[1951] *The Silver Locusts* (London: Hart-Davis, 1951). British hardbound edition of *MC*[1950]. Fifteen story-chapters with eleven short bridging chapters. Deletes "Usher II" and adds "The Fire Balloons" to the *MC*[1951] contents.

SL[1956] *The Silver Locusts* (London: Corgi, 1956). British mass-market edition of *SL*[1951].

SL[1963] *The Silver Locusts* (London: Corgi, 1963). British mass-market paperback reissue of *MC*[1951] under the SL title.

SL[1969] *The Silver Locusts* (London: Corgi, 1969). British mass-market paperback reissue of *MC*[1951] under the SL title.

SL[1974] *The Silver Locusts* (London: Hart-Davis, MacGibbon, 1974). Hardbound reissue of *SL*[1951]. Subsequent reissue by Collins (London: Granada, 1980) is titled *The Martian Chronicles.*

SL[1977] *The Silver Locusts* (London: Panther (Granada), 1977). Mass-market paperback edition of *SL*[1951]. Second issue by Collins (London: Grafton, 1979) is titled *The Martian Chronicles* (*SL* subtitle appears parenthetically on title page only).

SRB *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980). First edition, hardbound retrospective story compilation. Reissued as hardbound (U.K.) Granada, 1981.

SRB^{1983} *Stories of Ray Bradbury* (London: Granada, 1983). Second edition, trade paperback, in two volumes.

SS^{1966} *S Is for Space* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1966). First edition, hardbound. Remixed story colleciton. Reissued (U.K.) by Rupert Hart-Davis, 1968. See *RBS1*.

SS^{1970} *S Is for Space* (Garden City, New York: Bantam, 1970). Second edition, mass-market paperback. Multiple issues and reprintings. See *RBS1*.

SS^{1972} *S Is for Space* (London: Pan, 1972). Third edition, mass-market paperback.

VB *The Vintage Bradbury* (New York: Random House, 1965). Hardbound retrospective story compilation. Various issues include Vintage Library (hardbound), Vintage mass-market paperback, Vintage trade paperback.

TEXTUAL APPARATUS

1. The Sea Shell (April 27, 1943)

Bradbury's sixth appearance in *Weird Tales* is well documented in his personal records of the war years. His composition log provides a completion date of April 27, 1943, for a 3,000-word draft; his record of sales indicates a November 1943 sale to *Weird Tales*, with a misremembered payment of $33 written (at a later date) in his hand. The Nolan listing of sales by Julius Schwartz confirms a November 1, 1943, sale date with a pre-commission payment of $30 (in line with *Weird's* penny-a-word rate). "The Sea Shell" is listed in Bradbury's extended sales-by-publisher index; the payment entry here ($33.00) is based on the overestimate recorded in his original sales listing.

The story was first published in the January 1944 issue of *Weird Tales* (designated S1) with a heading illustration by A. R. Tilburne; the tailpiece line art (waves crashing on a rocky shore) is probably by Tilburne as well. The story was reset and reprinted without illustrations in the May 1944 Canadian issue of *Weird Tales* (S2). The February 1958 issue of *Short Stories* (S3) represents the last periodical reprinting. Bradbury elected not to include "The Sea Shell" among the *Weird Tales* stories he collected for *Dark Carnival* (1947), but the 2001 Gauntlet Press edition (*DC*^{2001}) included the story along with three other *Weird Tales* stories omitted from the first edition. "The Sea Shell" has been anthologized only once, in the multiple-author retrospective *The Fantastic Pulps* (1975).

The idea for "The Sea Shell" originated in Bradbury's memories of extended illness as a young boy in Waukegan, Illinois. During the fall term of his second-grade year, he spent weeks on bed-rest at home with (as he recalls) whooping cough. His aunt Neva spent many hours reading L. Frank Baum's Oz books and the stories of Edgar Allan Poe to the young boy; Neva's portal into those imaginary worlds evolved into the metaphor of the conch shell, a traditional source of imagined ocean sounds. Bradbury sent the story on to his New York agent, Julius Schwartz, in late April 1943; on May 5, Schwartz, who enjoyed all of Bradbury's child fantasy stories, offered a good reading response but was worried that the inevitable ending would make the story hard to sell. Schwartz

immediately sent "The Sea Shell" to John W. Campbell (Street & Smith) in hopes that it would find a place in *Unknown Worlds*, Campbell's fantasy companion to *Astounding Science Fiction*.

Campbell apparently declined, and Schwartz sent it on to *Weird Tales*; Bradbury appeared in nearly every bimonthly issue in 1943, but editor Dorothy McIlwraith wanted future Bradbury submissions to center on traditional horror subjects. Associate editor Monty Buchanan was more open to his child fantasy stories, and the maturing use of reverie in "The Sea Shell" secured a sale for the January 1944 issue; the sale was made in early November 1943, with payment to follow (*Weird Tales* maintained a pay-on-publication policy). Beginning with "The Sea Shell," Bradbury would place stories in all six *Weird Tales* issues for 1944.

A mature typescript first page (TS1), dated April 26, 1943, survives; collation with S1 suggests that it is part of Bradbury's carbon copy of the unlocated submission, or a discarded opening preliminary to the submitted copy. He appears to have retained the dated opening page for a number of stories from this period, apparently as proof of the original composition date for stories that might circulate extensively prior to publication. A complete typescript (TS2), which includes cancellations and interlined revisions by Bradbury, was made from S1 at a later date; TS2's descent from S1 is confirmed by the transmission of "peninsular" (3.19), "run" (6.12), and the more deeply buried error "scuddling" (2.35). Both the paper and typeface of TS2 suggest mid-1940s to early 1950s, indicating that Bradbury may have worked on revisions for inclusion of "The Sea Shell" in *Dark Carnival* or a subsequent collection before abandoning the effort. Bradbury approved inclusion of the unrevised S1 text in Gauntlet's 2001 edition of *Dark Carnival*, but took no role in preparing the text.

Bradbury's TS1 opening fragment represents his unmediated hand, and stands as copy-text for the opening paragraphs of the story; his 670 Venice Boulevard address, the date, and the story's word-count form extra-textual elements of the page, and are not considered part of the copy-text. In the absence of the rest of the submitted (printer's) copy, the S1 publication becomes copy-text for the remainder of the story. His tendency to form compounds beyond normal usage is apparent in the opening TS1 portion of the copy-text; these instances are not distracting, and are retained to preserve his stylistic intent. Substantive variants found in subsequent publications of "The Sea Shell" (as well as the post-publication revisions of TS2) are recorded in the historical list of post-copy-text substantives.

"The Sea Shell" anticipates "The Watchers" (1945) and "Fever Dream" (1948), where escape from illness is replaced by darker variations involving invasion by sinister microbes. "The Emissary" also begins with the same elemental Bradbury memories (and fears) of extended childhood illness. The suggestion that

children are almost a different species from adults is pursued in such stories as "Let's Play Poison" (1946); "Season of Disbelief" (1950), revised as an untitled chapter of *Dandelion Wine* (1957); and in the basic plot premise of *Farewell Summer* (2006), the long-deferred novel from which *Dandelion Wine* was extracted.

Sources: Author's sales record (1941–49); author's sales-by-publisher index (c. Feb. 1943); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Eller-Bradbury interviews, Oct. 2007; Schwartz to Bradbury, undated (postmarked May 5, 1943); Schwartz to Bradbury, Nov. 4, 1943; Tymn and Ashley, 727–36 (Weinberg).

—JE

Textual Notes

1.*[title]* The teaser lines following the title in two of the serializations are entirely editorial, and have no quoted or paraphrased anchor in Bradbury's text: "Every shell has its own secret path to some distant sea, if you will but listen and believe." (S1); "In a seashell's shining depths there is often more than the roaring of waves. Much more . . . of that Johnny was sure!" (S3). The S2 teaser ("Yesterday is nothing and tomorrow's so far away, said the little boy; NOW is the only time we can ever have."), paraphrasing the observation by Johnny's mother at 3.38–39, is misattributed by the editors to Johnny himself. None of these appear in the present edition.

1.12–13 Johnny . . . too.] The fragment TS1 tucks this sentence into the previous paragraph. There is no discernible editorial or layout rationale for the paragraph break first seen in S1. Bradbury was never offered the opportunity to read page proofs prior to publication of his *Weird Tales* stories; in the absence of any evidence that he inserted the paragraph break, the copy-text TS1 reading is retained.

2.35 scuffling] The S1 reading ("scuddling") is almost certainly a nonce word rather than one of Bradbury's occasional descriptive inventions; the proximity of "f" to "d" (adjacent on the keyboard) suggests a typing error carried into presswork. Context also suggests the contentious scuffling of the children, quite distinct from the simple "scuttling" movement of the crabs at 3.11. S3's solution of "scudding" is even further from the intended image of the children playing at war. The context and keystroke evidence together provide the rationale for emendation.

4.1–2 sea shore] The occurrence of "sea shore" here, contrasted with "seashore" at two other points in Johnny's various conversations with his mother (3.25, 4.22), probably reflects Bradbury's inconsistent usage rather than compositorial error. However, it may also reflect an intentional emphasis in Johnny's most insistent statement to his mother. In the absence of any discernible authorial preference, the inconsistency is retained.

5.30 creaking] The S1 reading ("creening" oarlocks) appears to be a typing error for "creaking" in the unlocated portion of Bradbury's submitted typescript

(the "e" for "a" and "n" for "k" represent parallel diagonal mis-strikes on the keyboard). Bradbury's only parallel reference describes the "creak of oar-locks" (4.41); taken together, these points of circumstantial evidence support the decision to emend.

6.8 sea shell] The compound form ("sea-shell") found here and at 6.13 in S1 is inconsistent with Bradbury's usage in the title lines of both the TS1 opening page fragment and the post-publication TS2; furthermore, Bradbury's holograph revisions to the opening pages of TS2 indicate that he paid close attention to the title and opening passages of the story, both before and after publication. S1 also presents "sea shell" as two words at all other points in the story. On the basis of these points of evidence, the compound forms are emended to reflect Bradbury's discernible preference.

Emendations

1.[title]* THE SEA SHELL] *DC*[2001]; THE SEA SHELL | by Ray Bradbury TS1; The Sea Shell *BY RAY BRADBURY* S1

1.12 its transparent] S1; its' transparent TS1

1.16 orchard trees] S1; orchard tree TS1

*2.35 scuffling] CE; scuddling S1

2.36 Naw] S2; Now S1

3.9 beer] S2; bear S1

3.19 peninsula] S2; peninsular S1

*5.30 creaking] CE; creening S1

*6.8 sea shell] CE; sea-shell S1 *Also* 6.13

6.12 sun.] S3; run. S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

◊1.12 its' transparent] TS1; its transparent S1, S2, S3

1.12 wings. Johnny] TS1; ~ . ¶ ~ S1; ~ . ~ S2, S3

◊1.16 orchard tree] S1; orchard trees TS1

1.16 bean teacher with spit-balls.] S1; upset teacher with paper airplanes. S3

1.19 bed? Lie down."] S1; bed?" TS2

1.20 already.] S1; all ready. S2; *om.* TS2

1.22 Consternation was the order of the moment.] S1; Consternation made Johnny sit up straight. S3; *om.* TS2

1.24–25 She spanked his left cheek very lightly.] S1; *om.* TS2

1.28 "I know you.] S1; *om.* TS2

1.28 But] S1; *om.* TS2

1.30 medicine."] S1; medicine. I promise." S3

2.1 spiraled] S1; spiral-shaped S3

2.2 and—pretty.] S1; and—beautiful. TS2

2.2–3 "Doctor Hull dropped by a few minutes ago and left it. He thought you might have fun with it."] S1; "Doctor Hull left it a few minutes ago. He thought it might be fun." TS2
2.6 JOHNNY looked palely dubious. His small] S1; Johnny's small TS2
2.7 fun with it?] S1; fun? TS2
2.8 sea, Johnny.] S1; sea. TS2
2.9 Doctor Hull picked] S1; The Doctor picked TS2
2.9 when he was out there.] S1; *om.* TS2
2.14 ¶ "Yes." ¶ "Aw—really?"] S1; *om.* TS2
2.16–17 young man.] S1; *om.* TS2
2.18 "Like this?"] S1; *om.* TS2
2.18 small pink] S1; *om.* TS2
2.18 ear and pressed] S1; ear, pressed TS2
2.24 came in] S1; rolled in TS2
2.27 black] S1; *om.* S3
*◊2.35 scuddling] S1; scudding S3
2.35–36 each one complaining] S1; each complaining TS2
◊2.36 Now,] S1; Naw, S2
3.1 motion film] S1; motion picture film S3
◊3.9 bear,] S1; beer, S2, S3
◊3.19 peninsular] S1; peninsula S2, S3
3.32 it."] S1; it," Johnny said. S3
3.38 else. Tomorrow's] S1; else. ¶ "Tomorrow's S3
3.39 Khayyam's,] S1; Khayyams, S3
4.1 in bed] S1; in a bed S2
*4.1–2 sea shore."] S1; seashore." S2
4.5–6 more: ¶ "I] S1; more. "I S3
5.16 That] S1; The voice S3
5.20–21 of children! Impatience. Impatience! Yes, yes, he was impatient! Why not?] S1; *om.* S3
5.27 Dad!"] S1; Dad!" Johnny said. S3
6.5 brushing, adjusted the] S1; brushing. She was adjusting the S3
6.10–11 dropped. ¶ The] S1; dropped. The S2
◊6.12 glassed run.] S1; glassed sun. S2, S3

2. Everything Instead of Something (Doodad) (April 29, 1943)

Bradbury's earliest reference to "Everything instead of Something" is a typed composition log entry for April 29, 1943, under the preliminary title "The Dinghooey Thingumabob." His holograph annotation ("SOLD! ASTOUND-

ING!") includes a star indicating the importance of his first true story sale to the premier science fiction magazine of the war years. A surviving opening page carbon of the first page (designated TS1) bears the submitted title ("Everything Instead of Something") and the same date as his initial log entry. His surviving sales record shows a June 1943 purchase by *Astounding Science Fiction* and the transitional title "Everything Instead of Doodad," a conflation of Bradbury's submitted title and the imposed publication title; the pre-commission price of $50 appears in Bradbury's hand. Nolan's list of sales by Julius Schwartz includes a probable receipt date of May 1, 1943, along with the post-commission price of $45; the title entry appears as "Doodad (Everything Instead of Something)." Bradbury's extended sales-by-publisher index, prepared years later, includes only the final title "Doodad" and the September 1943 *Astounding Science Fiction* publication date.

The September 1943 *Astounding* printing as "Doodad" (designated S1) carried two interior illustrations by Paul Orban; that issue also included the unrelated story "And Watch the Fountains" (selection 10), Bradbury's second Liar's Tale appearance in the magazine's "Probability Zero" column. "Doodad" was reprinted in a new typesetting for the December 1943 British issue of *Astounding* (S2), which did not include the Liar's Tale column. A typescript (TS2) survives in ribbon copy and two carbon copies, with no internal variations; collation indicates that it was prepared from S1 by Bradbury (or under his supervision), and is therefore a post-copy-text form. The Mexican genre pulp *Los Cuentos Fantásticos* 15 (1949) reprinted "Doodad" as "Hacelotodo": as this title suggests, the translator heroically tried to find or invent Spanish equivalents for Bradbury's various nonce words. Bradbury never included "Doodad" in any of his collections, but it appeared in three genre anthologies: *Strange Signposts* (FBA, 1966); *Alien Earth and Other Stories* (1967); and the British anthology *Wizards of Odd* (U.K., 1996; U.S., 1997). Bradbury's intended title was not restored in any of these publications.

In early May 1943 Julius Schwartz acknowledged receipt of both "Everything Instead of Something" and "The Sea Shell" (selection 1) at the bottom of an April 29 rejection letter for "I, Rocket" (volume 1, selection 21) from Standard Magazines. Schwartz's follow-up penny postcard (supplied by Bradbury for Schwartz and postmarked May 6) was very positive, and offered hope that the interior allusions to A. E. Van Vogt, a favorite among John Campbell's stable of science fiction writers, would end the string of Bradbury rejections from *Astounding*'s editor-in-chief. In fact, Bradbury's timing couldn't have been better; his inspiration, Van Vogt's *The Weapon Shops of Isher*, had appeared in the December 1942 issue of *Astounding*; its companion novella, *The Weapon Makers*, appeared in the February 1943 issue. Van Vogt had introduced his weapon shops and their coda, "The right to buy weapons is the right to be free," in "The

Seesaw" (*Astounding*, July 1941); taken together, these three works were among the most popular *Astounding* features of the early war years.

With so many of his regular *Astounding* writers in military service, including Jack Williamson, Robert A. Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, and eventually Henry Kuttner, Campbell finally turned to Bradbury and other writers he considered more suited for *Astounding*'s companion fantasy magazine, *Unknown*. Bradbury's deeply embedded plot allusions to Van Vogt almost certainly influenced Campbell's June purchase of "Everything Instead of Something" for the September 1943 issue. In Bradbury's variation, the weapon play comes as a surprise; the machines from Bradbury's appliance shop do "everything instead of something"—the problem is knowing that "everything" includes the power to kill. Unfortunately, this would be his only feature in the pages of *Astounding*; the semantic wordplay and enigmatic weaponry pay humorous homage to Van Vogt, but the plot develops more like the off-trail crime stories that Bradbury would soon begin publishing in the detective pulps. This underworld framework and the isolated protagonist's downward spiral reflect the almost weekly influence of Leigh Brackett on his work throughout the war years.

The TS1 fragment, the opening page carbon from Bradbury's submitted typescript, is one of a group of opening pages for submitted stories of this period that Bradbury apparently retained as proof of authorship and composition date. TS1 represents his unmediated narrative for the first 206 words, and stands as copy-text for this opening portion of the story. Bradbury's submitted TS1 title, "Everything Instead of Something," is closely tied to the semantics wordplay at the heart of this story, and is retained as title for the present edition; "Doodad," *Astounding*'s imposed publication title, appears parenthetically, so that the title history remains clear for readers. Given the absence of any further pages of TS1, S1 stands as copy-text for the rest of the narrative. S2 and the post-copy-text TS2 serve as sources of emendation for the correction of obvious errors; there is no evidence of authorial revision in either form, however, and all other substantive variations are relegated to the historical list of substantive variants.

A sequel to "Doodad," titled "The Things," survives as an unpublished 18-page typescript (volume 1, p. 304, provides a plot summary). Bradbury submitted it to Schwartz on September 20, 1943; John Campbell considered it well written, but the idea was not strong enough to win a place in *Astounding*. The likelihood of continuing the story line beyond *Astounding* was remote, and "The Things" never sold.

Sources: Author's sales record (1941–49); author's sales-by-publisher index (c. Feb. 1943); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Schwartz to Bradbury, [c. May 3], May 6, 1943; Campbell to Schwartz, Oct. 6, 1943; Tymn and Ashley, 64–80 (Berger).

—JE

Textual Notes

7.*[title]* From 1938 on, *Astounding*'s teaser paragraphs for each story were usually penned by editor-in-chief John Campbell; his interest in parallels between the human mind and the machines mankind creates is evident in his S1 teaser for "Doodad," which also prefaced the story in S2: "Did Man attain supremacy by specializing? No! Man is supreme because he can do everything instead of something. Then why should a machine be made the unsuccessful way? Why shouldn't it, like Man, do everything—"

7.1 the Shop.] Bradbury's capitalization of the first two references to the alien shop are preserved in the opening copy-text fragment, and reflect Bradbury's clear intention. These and all subsequent references to the shop were styled as lower-case by Astounding's typesetters or editors. The capitalized forms are retained here and emended throughout the rest of the narrative to restore Bradbury's intention.

7.5 black beetle-car] Bradbury's preferred compound "beetle-car" is retained where it appears in the TS1 opening portion of the copy-text, and is restored by emendation at subsequent points in the S1 copy-text portion where it has been styled as two words.

7.6 grey-white] Bradbury's spelling of "grey" was inconsistent over time, but he tended to use the "ey" British spelling often during the war years. His TS1 use of "grey" at this point on the opening page suggests a preference that probably carried through the missing subsequent pages of his submission. S1's imposed spelling "gray" is therefore emended out at all subsequent stand-alone and compound usages of the word.

7.23 WHATCHAMACALLITS] The corrupted spelling in S1 (WATCHAMACALLITS) almost certainly originated in galleys, when the font style and size was modified by compositors to form a facsimile of the Doodad shop sign; the error was subsequently transmitted to both S2 and TS. Bradbury used the proper slang spelling at two points in the running text (9.23, 13.21–22); his consistently correct usage, and the extra level of layout imposition required of compositors who may not have realized that the slang anchor should be "what" instead of "watch," form the basis for emendation.

14.39 a ettubrutus] the unconventional spelling and styling of this phrase is part of the language play that pervades the story, and is retained as an intentional rendering of character dialog.

Emendations

7.*[title]* EVERYTHING INSTEAD OF SOMETHING | (DOODAD)] CE; EVERYTHING INSTEAD OF SOMETHING | by | Ray Bradbury, TS1; Doodad | by Ray Bradbury S1

7.1 the Shop.] CE The Shop. TS1; the shop. S1 *Also* 7.16, 7.22, 8.5, 8.7, 8.20, 12.14, 13.2, 13.14, 15.4, 15.32, 16.15, 17.19
*7.5 beetle-car] TS1; beetle car S1 *Also* 9.8, 9.31, 10.9, 13.18, 15.35, 16.1, 16.34, 16.36
*7.6 grey-white] TS1; gray-white S1 *Similarly* 8.9, 9.14, 11.20, 16.24
7.12 finagling of Plastics,] TS2, S1; finaggling Plastics TS1
*7.23 WHATCHAMACALLITS] CE; WATCHAMACALLITS S1
8.21 it. He'd] S2; it. he'd S1
9.2 cryptically, "*You*] TS; cryptically, *You* S1
11.3 slid] TS; slide S1
11.25 into one tight] S2; into one one tight S1
12.29 kidnapped] TS; kidnaped S1
13.24 crocheting] TS; crochetting S1
14.29 "Oh,] S2; '~, S1
15.16 knickknacks] CE; knicknacks S1
17.33 unpleasantly] S2; unpleasently S1
17.33–35 him.] S2; him. | THE END. S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

7.12 finaggling Plastics] TS; finagling of Plastics S1, TS2, S2
8.3 exposé] S1; expose TS
8.4 three-dimensional] S1; three-dimensioned S2
◊9.2 cryptically, *You*] S1; cryptically. "*You* TS2
10.21 The fat] S1; That fat S2
◊11.3 slide] S1; slid TS2
◊11.25 into one one tight,] S1; into one tight S2, TS2
14.3 the abilities] S1; he abilities TS2; the abilities S2
14.24 Rruhre?"] S1; Rruhre^" S2
15.38 makings] S1; markings S2

Line-End Hyphenation

15.8 over-/stocked] overstocked

3. The Ducker (May 5, 1943)

Bradbury's first published story involving a World War II combat setting was also the first of his two Johnny Choir battlefield tales. His composition and submission log provides a May 5, 1943, date for "The Ducker," along with a penned notation of the subsequent sale to *Weird Tales*. "The Ducker" also appears in his author's sales record for July 1943; an overestimated price of $40.00 was added in Bradbury's hand, and his reasoning for this estimate is easy to infer:

his composition log shows that "The Ducker" went out at 3,500 words, and he was no doubt hoping that *Weird Tales* editors Dorothy McIlwraith and Monty Buchanan might pay more than their standard penny-a-word rate. This was not to be; Nolan's listing of sales by Julius Schwartz documents the actual payment date of September 1, 1943, and the pre-commission payment of $35.00 (*Weird*'s pay-on-publication policy usually meant that payment went out about the time that a story was set in type for the next bimonthly issue). Bradbury's expanded sales-by-publisher record includes the pre-commission payment and the publication date of November 1943. Schwartz's post-commission check for $31.50 for the $35.00 sale went out to Bradbury on September 2, 1943.

"The Ducker," its title referring to the reflex action of ducking bullets in combat, appeared in the November 1943 *Weird Tales* issue (designated S1) with a title illustration by Fred Humiston. The story was reprinted in the March 1944 Canadian issue of *Weird Tales* (S2), unillustrated and reset, with house styling such as British spellings imposed by a copy-editor. Bradbury never gathered this tale into any of his story collections; it was never anthologized in America, and only once in Britain, for *Weird Legacies* (U.K., 1977). A single typescript opening page (TS1), an apparent discard from his unlocated submission, carries the same May 5 date recorded in his submission log. His address is crossed out, which follows advice given by Julius Schwartz in an undated note from the spring of 1943. This page was apparently preserved, along with opening-page carbons or late discards from other period stories, as proof of composition. TS1, an unmediated and mature version of the opening of the story, preserves Bradbury's characteristic hyphenations or spellings at several points. This page serves as copy-text for the first six paragraphs. S1 represents the earliest complete version of the story, and serves as copy-text for the remainder of "The Ducker." A complete post-copy-text typescript (TS2), probably prepared by Bradbury to circulate for second serial or anthology sale, also survives. S2 and TS2 are sources for a few emendations to correct obvious errors, but they contain no substantive authorial revisions. A full record of the substantive post-copy-text variants follows the emendations list.

"The Ducker" proved to be a prelude for "Bang! You're Dead!" (selection 21), a continuation of Johnny Choir's journey into a fantasy state where memories of childhood war games create a sense of self-reliance and confidence that seem to shield him from danger. Bradbury would later observe that these stories countered his very real fear that he might die before reaching his full potential as a teller of tales. Bradbury's friend and mentor, genre writer Henry Kuttner, found these stories forced and implausible. NBC Radio staff writer Jack Snow was impressed by the Johnny Choir stories, and tried (unsuccessfully) to have them adapted by network writers for NBC's Saturday morning children's show *Adventure Ahead.*

The reality transference central to "The Ducker" would resurface in "Defense

Mech" (July 1944; *Planet Stories*, Spring 1946), where an encounter with a warlike Martian race prompts an anxiety-ridden crewman to compensate by seeing the attacking Martians as opponents in a sports contest. In each of these stories the psychological fantasy is engaging in its oddness, but reflects none of the emotional force or drama of his maturing creativity. Besides the two Johnny Choir tales, only "A Piece of Wood" (1952) and "Bullet With a Name" (1953) have similar contemporary military settings.

Sources: Author's sales record (1941–49); author's sales-by-publisher index (c. Feb. 1943); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Schwartz to Bradbury, Sept. 2, 1943; Jack Snow to Bradbury, Jan. 3, 1944 (misdated 1943), Mar. 26, Aug. 10, Sept. 6, Nov. 10, 1944; Kuttner to Bradbury, July 8, 1944; Eller–Bradbury interviews, Mar. 2002; Tymn and Ashley, 727–36 (Weinberg).

—JE

Textual Notes

18.11 hillsides,] Bradbury's TS1 rendering ("hill-sides") crosses the threshold between his characteristic hyphenations and distracting usage error. His copy-text reading is preserved in the emendations list, but is emended out of the story text.

18.15 cap-guns] The end-line hyphenation in S1 ("cap-/guns") masks Bradbury's intended compound form in TS1, which is copy-text for the opening of the story. TS2, a post-copy-text form, presents a single-word construction at mid-line; however, TS2 was prepared from S1, where the end-line break obscures Bradbury's intent.

20.2 Knows?" ¶ "Do] The paragraph break in S1 was masked by the compositor's failure to indent; the shift in dialog from Smith to Johnny requires the paragraph break, which was correctly imposed by the S2 compositor.

20.20 teddy-bear] The end-line hyphenation in the copy-text (teddy-/bear) is resolved as a compound for the present edition. Bradbury's tendency to form compounds and long strings of unhyphenated modifiers represents a stylistic hallmark, and it is likely that the S1 composition reflects that usage: TS1, prepared from S1 by or for the author, presents "teddy-bear" as a hyphenated compound at mid-line, free of end-line ambiguity.

22.30–31 down side of that hill] The lack of a definite article ("the" side) is consistent with the ten-year-old consciousness that "protects" Johnny Choir throughout "The Ducker." Since this reading appears to be Bradbury's implied preference and presents little chance of reader confusion, it is retained.

25.22 "Me?] Context strongly suggests that the full stop in the S1 reading ("Me.) is a compositor's error. The question mark emended into the copy-text at this point recovers the child-like tone and syntax that Bradbury carries throughout the story in Johnny Choir's dialog. A comma (the only logical

alternative to a query) would reflect the adult personality that Johnny suppresses throughout the tale.

Emendations

*18.11 hillsides,] S1; hill-sides, TS1
19.4 "I quit.] TS2; I quit. S1
*20.2 Knows?" ¶ "Do] CE; Knows?" "Do S1
20.30 play!" "I] CE; ~! "~ S1
21.33 queue] S2; queque S1
22.28 blue-black] S2; blue-back S1
24.23 replied^ Johnny,] S2; replied, Johnny, S1
24.28 Shrapnel,] S2; Sharpnel, S1
24.39–40 'Bang, you're dead,'] S2; ^Bang, you're dead,^ S1
25.1 'Bang, . . . dead!'] S2; "Bang, . . . dead!" S1
25.5 Johnny?] S2; Johnny. S1
*25.22 "Me?] CE; "~. S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

18.10 grey-planked] TS1; gray-planked S1, TS2
18.13 clothes-pins] TS1; clothespins S2
19.3 *"I'm*] S1; "I'm S2
19.4 I] S1; "I S2, TS2
19.6 of it a] S1; of a TS2
19.7 horseling] S1; horsling TS2
19.26–27 "It's a long way to Tipperary."] S1; IT'S A LONG WAY TO TIPPERARY. S2
19.29 "Penny] S1; Plenty S2
19.30 said] S1; said, S2
19.33 ice-cream] S1; ice cream S2
*◊20.2 Who Knows?" "Do—] S1; WhoKnows?" ¶ "Do— S2
20.13 more. ¶ "As] S1; more. "As S2
20.37 anyone.] S1; any one. S2
21.3 didn't] S1; did not S2
21.3 juju] S1; ju-ju S2
21.28 talk."] S1; talk. TS2
◊21.33 queque] S1; queue S2, TS2
22.6–7 private. ¶ Instructions] S1; private. Instructions S2
22.27 burned] S1; burnt S2 *Also* 22.28
◊22.28 blue-back] S1; blue-black S2, TS2
22.32 Gun fire] S1; Gunfire TS2
22.37 gonging] S1; bonging TS2
23.21 idiot's] S1; idiots S2

24.3 further] S1; farther S2
24.4 wide. ¶ They] S1; wide. They S2
25.1 "Bang, I got you first. *You're* dead!"] S1; 'Bang, I got you first. *You're* dead!' S2
◊25.5 Johnny.] S1; Johnny? S2
25.8 argue?"] S1; argue." S2
25.17 trembled. ¶ Johnny] S1; trembled. Johnny S2
25.37–38 Maybe *I*] S1; Maybe. *I* S2

Line-End Hyphenation

18.13 clothes-/pins] clothes-pins
*20.20 teddy-/bear] teddy-bear>

4. The Shape of Things (Tomorrow's Child) (May–June 1943)

The wartime paper rationing that led to the suspension of several science fiction and fantasy pulps during the spring and summer of 1943 did not discourage Bradbury's imagination from generating four genre stories for this dwindling market between late May and late June 1943. This burst of creativity began and ended with "The Shape of Things"; a carbon of his 21-page, 5,000-word typescript, dated May 24, 1943, survives in the Albright Collection (designated TS1). Bradbury's composition and submission log verifies this date, but the entry is struck out, along with listings for several other stories written around that time. A second log entry, dated June 25, 1943, indicates that Bradbury held back the story for a month while completing the other three tales: "Perchance to Dream" ("Asleep in Armageddon," selection 6), "Referent" (selection 7), and "The Calculator" ("Jonah of the Jove-Run," selection 8).

These stories represent an intermediate plateau in his maturing command of science fiction, and none would reach print until 1948. Bradbury's sales record shows a June 1947 purchase of "The Shape of Things" by Leo Margulies (Standard Magazines); the sales-by-publisher index confirms the sale for Standard's *Thrilling Wonder Stories* and publication in the February 1948 issue. Both of these entries cite a $90 post-commission payment. Nolan's listing of Bradbury sales by Julius Schwartz confirms a June 13, 1947, sales date and pre-commission payment of $100, as does a letter from Schwartz to Bradbury dated three days after the sale. This would be one of the last sales before Schwartz transitioned out of agenting Bradbury's pulp submissions.

The five-year trail from composition to publication was fairly complex. During the spring of 1943, Bradbury had already begun to explore the psychology behind this story. A month before composing "The Shape of Things," Bradbury had written the first draft of "The Small Assassin" (volume 1, selection 23), a

horror tale of a baby whose accelerated physical development was matched only by its birth-trauma hatred of its parents. "The Shape of Things" offered a more science-fictional and more humane variation: a child born between dimensions, conceived by human parents but trapped in a bizarre polygonal form. With pulps going down right and left, Schwartz set his sights on two of the oldest and most stable magazines: Street & Smith's *Astounding Science Fiction* and Standard's *Thrilling Wonder Stories*. During the summer of 1943 he submitted it to *Astounding*'s John W. Campbell, Jr., but not before relaying his concerns to Bradbury: "Looking at this story from Campbell's viewpoint, it's going to be awfully tough to convince him that such an extra-dimensional baby could be. . . . Story is more or less obvious even to final situation" (ellipses Schwartz's).

Campbell generally required a degree of probability based on a fairly high level of scientific extrapolation, and Bradbury's tale had very little of either. But the ending represented the greater problem—in bringing the child fully into our dimensional space, there were really only two outcomes: psychological trauma, or death. In his initial version, Bradbury had chosen psychological trauma so severe that the child was driven insane. Even Schwartz thought the ending was too predictable. Campbell rejected the story on July 15, 1943, and Schwartz turned next to Standard's Leo Margulies for a shot at *Thrilling Wonder Stories*. Margulies also found the conclusion problematic, and soon declined it as well.

The story may have been retired from circulation after these rejections; in late January 1946 Schwartz sent the original typescript back to Bradbury along with four other unsold tales, encouraging him to "work them over a bit." At this point Bradbury completely rewrote the story, and found his way to a third solution: if the child could not be brought safely through the inter-dimensional threshold, the parents would need to find a way into the child's polygonal universe. This strategy worked well enough with Bradbury's gifts for fantasy and whimsy, and in this new form the story went out to Schwartz and on to Paul Payne at *Planet Stories* on March 4, 1947. In late April, Payne turned it down as too off-trail; Schwartz promptly sent it off to Standard's Leo Margulies and *Thrilling Wonder*'s postwar editor Sam Merwin, Jr., who was actively pursuing Bradbury as his output of quality science fiction continued to rise through the late 1940s. With Merwin's likely encouragement, Margulies bought the story directly from Bradbury during June, 1947.

The final seven pages from an unpaginated carbon of the completely rewritten 1947 version survive in the Albright Collection (TS2). This version was first published in the February 1948 issue of *Thrilling Wonder Stories* (S1), with a title illustration by Vincent Napoli. Bradbury held "The Shape of Things" out of successive story collections until the late 1960s, when he turned once again to this story. A complete 1960s carbon typescript prepared directly from the S1 printing survives in the Albright Collection (TS3); the unlocated ribbon copy

of TS3 was almost certainly used to begin further revisions. In 1969 Bradbury included a carefully revised version of the S1 text in *I Sing the Body Electric!* (*IS*) under the title "Tomorrow's Child." In this form, and with this final title, Bradbury included it in his 100-story 1980 retrospective, *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* (*SRB*). S1's text (and original title) was the source for four anthology appearances, including *Travelers of Space* (FBA, 1951), *The Shape of Things* (1965), *Unspeakable People* (1969), and *Tales Out of Time* (1979). The lightly revised *IS* text became the source for British *Argosy*'s April 1970 issue (S2, abridged) and the British anthology *Space 2* (1974), both as "Tomorrow's Child."

Bradbury's final intention for the story descends from the completely rewritten S1 text of 1948 and the surviving seven pages of its setting copy (TS2). But the mission of the *Collected Stories* critical edition series is to recover, wherever possible, Bradbury's earliest settled intention for his stories, and that intention is represented by the first circulating version of 1943, preserved today only in the unpublished TS1 form with its original dark ending. The early TS1 version of "The Shape of Things" therefore stands as copy-text. The distinct S1 version of the story follows the original TS1 narrative at many points, and serves as reference for textual research, but the S1 version represents a subsequent authorial intention; its multitude of variant passages and episodes are not collatable, and are not emended into the copy-text. Our very few emendations to the TS1 copy-text, represented by the CE siglum, correct obvious errors and points of confusion that Bradbury would have wanted his editors to address. All are recorded below in the Emendations list. Although the S1 version and subsequent revisions are not word-for-word collatable with TS1, selected passages of significance are recorded in the historical list of post-copy-text substantives to provide a sense of how Bradbury refashioned key passages of this tale. "Tomorrow's Child," the title for the S1 text as revised for *IS*, is widely known and remains in print; this title is appended in parenthesis to the title line of "The Shape of Things" to avoid reader confusion.

Sources: Author's sales record (1941–49); author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales-by-publisher indexes (c. 1950); author's note card files (c. 1943–1975); Bradbury story status sheet responses from Schwartz, c. fall 1943; Schwartz to Bradbury, Jan. 28, 1946, April 30 and June 16, 1947; Ashley, 187–89; Tymn and Ashley, 754–62 (Ewald and Ashley).

—JE

Textual Notes

27.*[title]* Bradbury's name, address ("670 Verice [sic] Boulevard, Venice, California"), date of composition ("May 24th, 1943"), and word count for the 5,000-word typescript appear above the title line; these are considered extra-textual elements of the typescript, and are not included in the text or the emendation record.

28.35 I'll raise it.] In rewriting the story for S1, Bradbury modified the mother's role without changing the basic progression of events. In the 1943 copy-text, Ellen believes that her child died at birth, and that the pyramid creature is merely a live specimen of a rare animal gathered on expedition by her naturalist-husband. In the 1947 rewrite, the mother (now Polly) knows that the pyramid is her child, and has far more trouble adjusting to the long-term consequences.

30.31 Make it a pet.] The original strategy of bringing Py home as an exotic pet takes a humanizing turn in the S1 revisions, where Horn's wife knows that the polygon is her child, and one day may become human: "He isn't dead, I thank God for that. He's—I don't know how to explain—still unborn. I like to think he hasn't been born yet."

31.8 is—my baby.] The context suggests that the original reading ("me—my baby") may have been the result of a doubling of "me" caused by an eye-skip between adjacent lines. The passage only makes sense if "me" is emended to "is."

33.19 "Daddy!"] In the S1 revisions, Bradbury replaces the English word with a transposition more fitting a trans-dimensional child ("Wheely!"). The alien absurdity drives the mother further into despair and alcoholism.

34.38–35.23 "Monster! Monster!" . . . monster?"] The major fork between the two versions of "The Shape of Things" begins at this point. In the original 1943 copy-text version, Horn's wife Ellen never falters when the hysterical neighbor summons the police; when Dr. Wolcott tells her the "pet" is really her child, she has already sensed the truth, and remains strong right to the tragic end of the story. In the S1 revisions, however, Horn's wife knows that Py is her child all along, and the prolonged stress has led her to alcoholism. She drunkenly exhibits the child for her neighbors, and now regards him as a freakish pet. Her breakdown prompts Horn to call Dr. Wolcott, leading to the final experiment; in revision, Wolcott does not force the child into our world, causing irreparable psychological damage; instead, he saves the child by sending the parents into his dimension, where a stable family begins to form for the first time.

35.32 given you] Bradbury's copy text reading is an acceptable colloquialism, and is retained.

36.2–5 floor. ¶¶ When] The intended section break at this point is obscured by a page break between paragraphs. Bradbury ended the page of text a line higher than he usually would; this physical indicator, along with the temporal shift in the narrative, provides the rationale for emending in a section break at this point in the text.

36.33 fifth dimension] Bradbury's high school astronomy class notes show that he studied time as the fourth dimension, but found it difficult to apprehend the inter-dimensional implications. In "The Shape of Things" he uses both

the fourth and fifth dimension to define the child's location in space, but not in space-time. His inconsistencies are allowed to stand as a representation of his unsettled sense of space-time as he composed the initial 1943 version. For the 1947 S1 revisions, Bradbury has Dr. Wolcott allude to bringing the baby "out of the dimension, fourth, fifth, or sixth, that it is in." For the 1969 *IS* revisions, the exasperation of the scientist (and perhaps the author) comes through: "I've tried to bring the baby out of whatever hell dimension, fourth, fifth, or sixth, that it is in."

Emendations

27.[title]* The Shape of Things (Tomorrow's Child)] CE; THE SHAPE OF THINGS | by | Ray Bradbury TS1, S1; Tomorrow's Child *IS*
27.23 weighs] CE; weights TS1
28.13 affected] CE; effected TS1
28.18 dimension."] CE; dimension. TS1
28.34 It still belongs] CE; It's still belongs TS1
29.39 baby, Mrs.] CE; baby Mrs. TS1
30.40 are] CE; is TS1
30.41 grow,] CE; grown, TS1
*31.8 is—my baby.] CE; me—my baby. TS1
31.34 our] CE; are TS1
32.38 year's] CE; years' TS1
33.11–12 naturalists'] CE; naturalists TS1
33.35 it's] CE; its TS1
33.36 "It's] CE; "Its TS1
34.13 paraphernalia] CE; pharaphenalia TS1
34.25 Ellen] CE; Elln TS1
34.25 affection,] CE; effection TS1
34.39 'copter] CE; 'coptor TS1
35.27 attachés] CE; attaches TS1
*36.2–5 floor. ¶¶ When] CE; ~ . ¶ ~ TS1
36.25 mother's] CE; mothers TS1
37.24 dimmed] CE; dimned TS1
37.37 room's] CE; rooms' TS1
37.41 thought] CE; though TS1
39.4 refocused] CE; refoccused TS1
39.16 did.] CE; did. | the end

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

Unlike the full substantive listings found in the apparatus of other selections, this collation list is limited to selected post-copy-text variant passages origi-

nating with the rewritten S1 text of 1947; subsequent interior revisions and editorial variants originating in S2 and *IS* (1969) are embedded parenthetically. These selections point up the major divergence in personality and action that Bradbury developed in transforming the intuitive, semantically-trained mother of TS1 ("Ellen") into the tormented mother of S1 ("Polly").

28.37–29.2 "If you *must* . . . later."] TS1; They told Polly the next day. Not everything. Just enough. Just a hint. They told her the baby was not well, in a certain way. They talked slowly, and in ◆ every [ever- S2, *IS*] tightening circles, in upon Polly. Then Dr. Wolcott gave a long lecture on the birth-mechanisms, how they helped a woman in her ◆ labor [labour S2], and how the birth-mechs were put together, and how, this time, they short-circuited. There was another man of scientific means present and he gave her a dry little talk on dimensions, holding up his fingers, so! one two three and four. Still another man talked of energy and matter. Another spoke of underprivileged children. ¶ Polly finally sat up in bed and said, "What's all the talk for? What's wrong with my baby that you should all be talking so long?" S1

33.21–35 Ellen laughed . . . hostile."] TS1; "He's not so bad, you know," she said. "Once you get to know him. I can even—hold him in my arms. He's warm and he cries and he even needs his triangular diapers." Here she laughed. He noticed a nervous tremor in the laugh, however. "No, I didn't cry, Pete, because that's my baby. Or, he will be. He isn't dead, I thank God for that. He's—I don't know how to explain—still unborn. I like to think he hasn't been born yet. We're waiting for him to show up. I have confidence in Dr. Wolcott. Haven't you?" ¶ "You're right, you're right." He reached over and held her hand. "You know something? You're a peach." ¶ "I can hold on," she said, sitting there looking ahead as the green country swung under them. ◆ "I can wait. [*om.* S2, *IS*] As long as I know something good will happen. I won't let it hurt or shock me. ◆ The mind is a great thing. If it has some hope, then it's cushioned all around. [*om.* S2, *IS*] I'll wait six months," ◆ she said. And she looked over the edge of the helicopter. [*om.* S2, *IS*] "And then maybe I'll kill myself." S1

34.11–18 Ellen and Pete . . . Wolcott beamed.] TS1; Summer came. Peter Horn himself was busy with his export, import business. But he made certain ◆ [that S2] he was home every night. Polly was all right during the day, but, at night, when she had to be alone with the child, she got to smoking too much, and one night he found her passed out on the davenport, an empty sherry bottle on the table beside her. From then on, he took care of the child himself, nights. When it cried it made a weird whistling noise, like some jungle animal lost and wailing. It wasn't the sound of a ◆ baby [child S2, *IS*]. F ¶ Peter Horn had the nursery sound-proofed. ¶ "So your wife won't hear your baby crying?" asked the workman. ¶ "Yeah," said Pete Horn. "So she won't hear." [*om.* S2] S1

34.34–35.24 Arriving home . . . Wolcott responded instantly.] TS1; Polly held the pyramid up. "Say ◆ Daddy ['Father' S2; Father *IS*]!" she cried, trying to focus on her husband. ¶ ◆ "Wheellly [Wheel S2, *IS*]!" cried the pyramid. ¶ "Polly!" ◆ shouted Peter Horn, and strode forward [Peter Horn said S2, *IS*]. ¶ "He's friendly as a dog or a cat," said Polly ◆ staggering along, taking [moving S2, *IS*] the child with her. ◆ She laughed at the neighbors. [*om.* S2, *IS*] "Oh, no, he's not dangerous. ◆ He looks dangerous, yes, but he's not. [*om.* S2, *IS*] He's friendly as a baby. My husband brought him from Afghanistan ◆ the other day [*om.* S2, *IS*]. Has anybody got a drink?" ¶ The neighbors began to move off ◆ when Peter Horn glared at them [*om.* S2, *IS*]. ¶ "Come back!" Polly waved at them. ◆ "Come back! [*om.* S2, *IS*] Don't you want to see my baby? ◆ *Don't* you? Yes, he's my *child,* my very *own!* [*om.* S2, *IS*] Isn't he simply beautiful!" ¶ He slapped her face. ¶ "My baby," she said brokenly ◆ [and collapsed S2, *IS*]. ¶ ◆ He slapped her again and again until she quit saying it and collapsed. [*om.* S2, *IS*] ◆ He [Peter S2, *IS*] picked her up and took her ◆ [back S2] into the house. Then he came out and took Py in and then he sat down and phoned the Institute. ¶ "Dr. Wolcott. This is Horn. You'd better ◆ get [have S2, *IS*] your stuff ready ◆ for the experiment. [*om.* S2, *IS*] It's tonight or not at all." S1

36.25–35 "I intend . . . our normal world."] TS1; Dr. Wolcott explained. We know what series of ◆ accidents [malfunctions *IS*], mechanical and electrical, forced Py into his present state. We can ◆ produce [reproduce S2, *IS*] those accidents and stresses. But bringing him *back* is something else. It might take a million trials and failures before we got the combination. The combination that jammed him into another space was an accident, but luckily we saw, observed and recorded it. There are no records for bringing one back. We have to work in the dark. Therefore, it will be easier to put *you* in the fourth dimension than to bring Py into ours." S1

38.31–39.16 It was dark . . . go insane. ¶ It did.] TS1; They were in another dimension. ¶ He heard Polly cry out. There was much light. Then he slipped from the table, stood blinking. Polly was running. She stooped and picked up something from the floor. ¶ It was Peter Horn's son. A living, pink-faced, blue-eyed boy, lying in her arms, gasping and blinking and crying. ¶ The pyramidal shape was gone. Polly was crying with happiness. ¶ Peter ◆ [Horn S2, *IS*] walked across the room, trembling, trying to smile himself, to hold on to Polly and the ◆ boy baby [child S2, *IS*], both at the same time, and ◆ cry [weep S2, *IS*] with them. ¶ "Well!" said Wolcott, standing back. He did not move for a long while. He only watched the White Oblong and the ◆ White slim [slim White S2, *IS*] Rectangle holding the Blue Pyramid on the opposite side of the room. An assistant came ◆ in [through S2] the door. ¶ "*Shh,*" said Wolcott, hand to his lips. "They'll want to be alone awhile. Come along." He took the assistant by the arm and tiptoed across the room. ◆ [¶

S2] The White rectangle and the White Oblong didn't even look up when the door closed. S1

5. The Night (May 31, 1943)

Bradbury's composition log shows that he completed "The Night" on May 31, 1943; this was one of his most significant early stories, destined for a complete rewriting and a place in his enduring 1957 novelized story cycle, *Dandelion Wine*. Nevertheless, it was also one of the few early quality pieces to remain unpublished until the post-war years. Bradbury's notecard files indicate that he probed the mainstream magazine market with "The Night" during the fall of 1945. His sales record documents a post-commission $27 sale to *Weird Tales* in December 1945; Nolan's list of sales by Julius Schwartz implies that *Weird Tales* accepted the story on November 1, 1945, for a pre-commission price of $30. Bradbury's expanded sales-by-publisher record also shows the pre-commission payment of $30 and a publication date of July 1946.

With many of the science fiction and fantasy magazines suspended or curtailed by wartime paper rationing, Julius Schwartz felt that *Weird Tales* offered the best chance for the child-centered memories of "The Night." He submitted it to *Weird*'s editors during the summer of 1943, but a backlog of Bradbury submissions left the story in limbo through the fall of 1943. There was a deeper concern, however: Schwartz knew that *Weird*'s editor-in-chief Dorothy McIlwraith wanted traditional horror and ghost tales rather than any more fantasies from Bradbury; in December 1943 or January 1944, he withdrew the story from circulation for the time being, and urged Bradbury to turn away from the "artsy and child stuff" (like "The Poems" and "The Lake") if he wanted to continue selling to *Weird Tales*. Schwartz intended to resubmit "The Night" to *Weird* at a more opportune time; McIlwraith and Buchanan had made exceptions before, especially when the emotional impact and unique style of a Bradbury story overshadowed the lack of conventional horror plotting.

By the summer of 1945, Bradbury's self-initiated break into the major market magazines convinced him to circulate a carbon of "The Night" independently of Schwartz's efforts with the genre pulps. His cumulative note card file of story submissions documents a trail of self-submissions to *Tomorrow* (Aug. 1945), *Harper's Magazine* (Sep. 1945), and *Harper's Bazaar* (Dec. 1945). Harper's editor Katherine Gauss praised the mood, but found the story value too slight to purchase, and rejected "The Night" in mid-October 1945. Bradbury was in Mexico from September to late November 1945, and only learned of the *Weird Tales* acceptance in early December. The sale to *Weird*'s associate editor Monty Buchanan was secured shortly afterward, when *Harper's Bazaar* declined the story.

"The Night" finally reached print in the July 1946 issue of *Weird Tales* (des-

ignated S1) with a title illustration by Boris Dolgov, and was reprinted (reset and unillustrated) in the September 1946 Canadian issue (S2). The S1 version was subsequently reset and reprinted in two more periodicals: The January 1968 issue of *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* (S3); and the spring 1976 issue of *Starwind* (S4), which included a prefatory note by the author on the story's origins. This version was also the source of one anthology appearance, Alfred Hitchcock's *Suspense Stories* (1949; reissued 1963 as *Alfred Hitchcock's A Baker's Dozen of Suspense Stories*), and two textbook appearances, beginning with *Enjoying English 9* (1975, as "Ice Cream on a Summer's Evening").

During 1946, Bradbury made significant revisions to "The Night" for inclusion in his first story collection, *Dark Carnival* (*DC*). This revised version was reset and included in the British edition (*DC*[1948]), but "The Night" was one of eleven stories held out when he transformed *Dark Carnival* into *The October Country* (1955); Bradbury's decision to withhold the story was due to the further evolution of "The Night" into one of the integral early chapters of *Dandelion Wine* (1957). In spite of the *October Country* omission, the *Dark Carnival* version was the source for two later Bradbury collections: *The Small Assassin* (*SA*[1962]), a British paperback that gathered stories from the British *Dark Carnival* that had not been included in *The October Country*; and *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* (*SRB*[1980]), a major retrospective collection of what Bradbury and his Knopf editors considered his one hundred best tales.

The 1957 *Dandelion Wine* version of "The Night" is, essentially, a distinct work, even though the basic situation remained centered on the same sequence of events: an evening of 1920s small-town life seen through the eyes of a young boy. His older brother is very late returning home from play; all ends well, but during the course of the evening the young protagonist learns the first lessons of maturity: parents cannot always protect their children from the unknown, and parents can be afraid. Bradbury had originally written "The Night" in the second person, an experiment prompted in a few of his early stories by his reading of W. Somerset Maugham's experiments with this narrative point of view. The initial second person narrative of "The Night" radiates through all the serial forms, as well as the *Dark Carnival* revised version of 1947. But for *Dandelion Wine*, Bradbury replaced the original narrative with a new third-person progression through the same events, revising description and dialog along the way. This version represents a completely different intention at a later time in Bradbury's career, easily accessible today through various editions of *Dandelion Wine*; it is distinct from the original story and is not included in the present volume.

A first carbon-copy opening page from Bradbury's original typescript (TS) for the "The Night" survives, dated (in Bradbury's hand) May 31, 1943. In the absence of any further pages, the copy-text is split between TS (containing the opening four paragraphs of the story) and S1, which together represents as close as we can come to his earliest settled intention. The significant layer

of revisions in *Dark Carnival* reflect a shifting change of intention from the initial serial form to the collected stories form; they are not emended into the text, but the substantive variants from *DC* and DC^{1948} are recorded in the list of post-copy-text substantives. Taken together, the emended text and the historical record of substantives reveal how Bradbury conceived and refined one of his earliest nostalgic Green Town tales prior to the completely rewritten story that entered *Dandelion Wine*. The S3 and S4 serials, as well as the *SA* and *SRB* texts that descend from *DC*, fall outside this period or authorial revision, and are not included in the apparatus.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); Author's sales record (1941–49); author's sales-by-publisher index; author's agency listing (c. 1950); author's notecard story files (c. 1943–1975); story status sheet responses from Schwartz, c. fall 1943, Nov. 1943 and c. Jan. 1944; Schwartz to Bradbury, Dec. 5, 1945; Katherine Gauss (*Harper's Magazine*) to Bradbury, Oct. 18, 1945; UCLA Oral History interview (1962): 133–36; Tymn and Ashley, 727–36 (Weinberg).

—JE

Textual Notes

40.9 ice-cream.] The three instances of the compound form in the opening TS portion of the copy-text establish Bradbury's preference over the styling of subsequent house editors.

41.24–25 Two Black Crows records] The S1 reading (Two Black Crow records) obscures the collective singular; as the upper case implies, the number "Two" refers to the full name of the two-man recording act, rather than the number of records, and the reading is emended accordingly. The usage for all the records identified in this passage is adjectival, not possessive, and requires no apostrophe.

43.15 skeleton hulk] The DC^{1947} revision at this point, "a pile of ruins on the ravine's edge," clarifies Bradbury's simile of a ruined house; however, the *DC* reading is the product of a subsequent intention, and is relegated to the post-copy-text list of rejected substantives. The original S1 reading is clear enough for context, and stands without emendation in the present edition.

43.39 Ghosts, . . . epithets] Bradbury catalog of supernatural creatures in S1 invokes names and words that the eight-year-old protagonist could not command; this passage was removed in the DC^{1947} revisions, but is retained here as part of Bradbury's original and sometimes inconsistent sense of the narrative consciousness.

Emendations

40.*[title]* The Night] CE; THE NIGHT | by | Ray Bradbury TS; *The Night* | BY RAY BRADBURY S1

40.15 Mother] S1; mother TS
*40.22 ice-cream.] CE; ice cream S1 *Also* 41.1, 41.14, 41.16, 42.8
*41.24–25 Two Black Crows] CE; Two Black Crow S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

40.3 awhile] TS; a while S1; awhile *DC*; a while DC^{1948}
40.4 that was popular] TS, S1; that is popular DC^{1948}
40.7 lights.] TS, S1; light. S2
40.8 Singer's. In] TS, S1; Singer's. ¶ In S4
40.9 washing] TS, S1; wash *DC*, DC^{1948}
*40.9 ice-cream] TS; ice cream. S1; ice-cream and staring into the dark. *DC*, DC^{1948}
40.10 Your Mother and yourself] S1; You and your mother *DC*, DC^{1948}
40.13 pint] TS; pine S1; pint S2, S4, *DC*, DC^{1948}
40.17 trees toward] S1; trees, towards DC^{1948}
40.17 city] S1; town *DC*, DC^{1948}
40.17 can hear] S1; can only hear *DC*, DC^{1948}
40.19 slap on the] S1; slap the *DC*, DC^{1948}
40.19–20 a lonely little boy,] S1; *om. DC*, DC^{1948}
40.20 business,] S1; store, *DC*, DC^{1948}
40.22 Chocolate on top. Yes,"] S1; Chocolate on top, yes!" *DC*, DC^{1948}
40.29 find Mother] S1; find Mom *DC*, DC^{1948} *Also* 41.17, 46.21
41.2–4 kitchen and divides it. She gives you your special portion of chocolate, dishes out some for herself and puts the rest away, "We'll save some for Skipper and your father."] S1; kitchen, divides it. Giving you your special portion of chocolate, she dishes out some for herself and the rest is put away, "For Skipper and your father when they come." *DC*, DC^{1948}
41.3 away, "We'll] S1; away. ¶ "We'll S4
41.5–7 Twelve years old he is, and healthy, red-faced, hawk-nosed and tawny-haired. Broad-shouldered for his years] S1; He's twelve and healthy, red-faced, hawk-nosed, tawny-haired, broad-shouldered for his years, *DC*, DC^{1948}
41.8 being born] S1; having been born *DC*
41.10 the older kids] S1; the kids *DC*, DC^{1948}
41.10–11 yelling and kicking and running all evening,] S1; yelling, kicking, running for hours, *DC*, DC^{1948}
41.14 sit and enjoy the ice cream.] S1; sit enjoying the ice-cream. *DC*, DC^{1948}
41.14 dark] S1; quiet *DC*, DC^{1948}
41.15–16 little house on this little] S1; small house on this small *DC*
41.20 sleeping tonight."] S1; sleeping." *DC*, DC^{1948}
41.21 darkness] S1; dark *DC*, DC^{1948}
41.22–23 with the stars holding up the rest of the universe] S1; *om. DC*, DC^{1948}
41.23 sound. The] S1; sound because the *DC*

41.24 and the Two] S1; and Two *DC*, *DC*[1948]
41.26 dark dark dark,] S1; dark, dark, S4
41.33 and put them in the cupboard.] S1; *om.* *DC*, *DC*[1948]
41.35–36 room again, take the cushions off the couch and, together, yank] S1; room, remove the couch cushions and, together, yank *DC*, *DC*[1948]
41.36 is. Mother] S1; is. ¶ Mother S4
41.37 punching the pillows] S1; punching pillows *DC*
41.37–38 head and then,] S1; head. Then, *DC*[1948]
41.39 a while,] S1; awhile *DC*
42.2 moment and then gets up and goes to the door and calls.] S1; moment, then stands up, goes to the door, and calls. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
42.9 the heat of summer] S1; summer's heat *DC*, *DC*[1948]
42.9–11 notice the way Mother's eyes slide and blink and the way she stands undecided and is kind of nervous.] S1; notice Mom's eyes sliding, blinking; the way she stands undecided and is nervous. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
42.12–14 Mother opens the screen door. She steps out into the night and walks off the porch, down the steps, and down the walk about fifty feet. You listen to her feet moving.] S1; She opens the screen door. Stepping out into the night she walks down the steps and down the front sidewalk under the lilac bush. You listen to her moving feet. *DC*
42.16 room, listening.] S1; room. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
42.18 Coming!"] S1; Hey!" *DC*, *DC*[1948]
42.19 sit there looking] S1; sit looking *DC*, *DC*[1948]
42.20–21 with the crystal bobbins on it,] S1; with its crystal bobbins gleaming quietly, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
42.21 blue] S1; purple *DC*, *DC*[1948]
42.22 the edge of the bed] S1; the bed *DC*
42.22 how much it hurts. Quite a bit.] S1; if it hurts. It does. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
42.29 hand and together] S1; hand. Together *DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.4 There is a razor strop in] S1; A razor strop hangs in *DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.4–6 about it, remembering when Dad has doubled it, flourished it with muscled control over and across your leaping flanks. You doubt whether Mother] S1; of it, remember when Dad has doubled and flourished it with muscled control over your frantic limbs. You doubt Mother *DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.8 corner] S1; Corner *DC*[1948]
43.9 yards,] S1; yards away, *DC*
43.10 dank sewer] S1; dark sewer *DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.10 sewer, rotten] S1; sewer-rotten S2
43.10 dark green] S1; thick green *DC*, *DC*[1948]
*43.14–15 a skeleton hulk brooding on the ravine's lip.] S1; a pile of ruins on the ravine's edge. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

43.16 old and you] S1; old, you *DC*
43.16 death and fear and dread.] S1; dead, fear, or dread. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.17 and your Grandfather] S1; and Grandfather *DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.18 away; looking] S1; away—looking *DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.18 coffin,] S1; casket *DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.19–20upon politics.] S1; on politics *DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.23–24 realize she will] S1; realized she'll *DC*
43.24 or crying and making] S1; and crying and make *DC*
43.29 sidewalk,] S1; pavement, *DC*[1948]
43.37 you will] S1; you'll *DC*[1948]
*43.39 Ghosts, leprechauns, trolls, goblins, spirits; pitiful epithets,] S1; *om. DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.40 gloom.] S1; nothingness. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
43.40 shadows, among the thick] S1; shadow, among thick *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.2 ends,] S1; ceases, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.3 Yourself and your Mother.] S1; You and your mother. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.7 feel your Mother] S1; feel Mother *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.8 Why does she do that?] S1; Why? *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.8 But is she not bigger,] S1; But she is bigger, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.9 yourself?] S1; yourself, isn't she? *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.11 up, no solace in being an adult,] S1; up? no solace in being an adult? *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.11–12 sanctuary any place in life,] S1; sanctuary in life? *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.13 your mind.] S1; you. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.15 man] S1; person *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.19 rescue] S1; find *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.25 certainly] S1; *certainly DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.26–27 and Death would meet you in the full.] S1; and— *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.28–29 beginning to tremble] S1; beginning-to-tremble S4, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.30–31 Constitution of the United States, or] S1; United States Constitution or *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.32 but into] S1; save into *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.32 she will] S1; she'll *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.35 hard and cling] S1; hard, cling *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.35–36 die, you] S1; die, please, you *DC*
44.38 jungle a few paces.] S1; jungle. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.39 voice is all made of trembles.] S1; voice trembles. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
44.39 "Mother.] S1; "Mom. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.1 quiet.] S1; high. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.5 Accidents.] S1; Accident. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

45.10 lonely, as] S1; lonely, each as *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.11 town's] S1; towns' *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.13 living] S1; lived *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.15 night.] S1; dark. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.25 happen. It] S1; happen. ¶ It *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.25–26 bunching its] S1; bunching together its *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.26 muscles,] S1; fibres, *DC*
45.26 in its power] S1; in power *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.26–27 around the sleeping countryside] S1; about the sleeping countrysides, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.27–31 From damp . . . still hot.] S1; From dew-sodden forest and dells and rolling hills where dogs tilt heads to moons, from all around the great silence is sucked into one center, and you at the core of it. In ten seconds now, something will happen, something will happen. The crickets keep their truce, the stars are so low you can almost brush the tinsel. There are swarms of them, hot and sharp. *DC*
45.32 Oh, it is] S1; Oh, it's *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.33 Oh, oh, God.] S1; Oh God! *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.34 in the silence:] S1; across the ravine: *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.38 feet running down] S1; tennis shoes padding down *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.38 stomach] S1; pit *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.39 running, laughing.] S1; dashing, giggling. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.39 Skipper, and Chuck] S1; Skipper, Chuck *DC*, *DC*[1948]
45.40 laughing.] S1; giggling. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
46.1 suck back up] S1; suck up *DC*, *DC*[1948]
46.2 chirp again.] S1; sing! *DC*, *DC*[1948]
46.4–5 The darkness yanks back its odorous wet skirt and the three] S1; As the dark retreats like a wave on a shore, three *DC*, *DC*[1948]
46.6 Shorts!"] S1; Shorts! Hey!" *DC*, *DC*[1948]
46.13 you thought—] S1; you thought that— S4
46.15 metal nameless thing.] S1; metal thing, nameless and running. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
46.18–19 ago. . . . ¶ You hear footsteps] S1; ago. . . . You smell the sweat of Skip beside you. It is magic. You stop trembling. You hear footsteps *DC*, *DC*[1948]

6. Perchance to Dream (Asleep in Armageddon) (c. June 1943)

During May and June 1943, Bradbury composed a group of science fiction stories that circulated intermittently until 1948, when all four finally reached print. Bradbury was still developing in this genre as he composed these tales,

and they have the transitional quality of the science fiction he was occasionally publishing during the war years. "Perchance to Dream" was the first of this odd group of stories to emerge from his subconscious mind: What if a marooned space pilot, awaiting a scheduled rescue from a strange planetoid, encounters resident ghosts from the planet's past who take over his dreams and drive him to sleep-deprived insanity? They'll be waiting for the rescue crew as well.

Bradbury actually began the story a year earlier; four pages of mixed outline and text, titled "To Sleep—Perchance to Dream" (TSπ), survive with a date of April 8, 1942. For the most part, the science fiction stories he composed during the war years, both published and unpublished, are of a far more tentative quality than his postwar tales, both in terms of style and the more masterful tone of dark strangeness that soon developed in his science fiction. The TSπ fragments also have this tentative feel, and may have been set aside for a time; in fact, the developing focus of alienation and loneliness on strange worlds found in "Perchance to Dream" is very close to three stories composed in May and June 1943: "The Shape of Things" (selection 4), "Referent" (selection 7), and "The Calculator" ("Jonah of the Jove Run") (selection 8). The collective textual evidence for a late spring 1943 composition date is fairly compelling—the texts of the initial 1948 serializations of all four stories suggest that they emerged from a single phase or plateau of his development as a science fiction writer. Although "Perchance to Dream" does not appear in Bradbury's 1942–45 composition and submission log, the complete story that emerged from the fragment outline of 1942 can be placed with a high degree of confidence within the May–June 1943 compositional period of the other three tales. His author's sales record shows that "Perchance to Dream" sold to *Planet Stories* during or after October 1947 for $100; the actual sales date of December 1947 is confirmed in his notecard file. Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index includes the $100 sale price and the *Planet Stories* winter 1948 publication date under the title "Asleep in Armageddon." Bradbury made some of these later pulp sales on his own; there is no sales commission or any record of the story in Nolan's listing of stories sold by Schwartz.

Bradbury began to place less refined tales in *Planet Stories* during the late war years, thanks to Leigh Brackett's influence and the interest shown by *Planet*'s associate editor Wilbur Peacock. His successor, Paul Payne, proved to be an even stronger supporter as Bradbury's talents increased. By the end of 1947, Bradbury was handling his own pulp sales during the transition from Julius Schwartz to his new major market agent, Don Congdon, and submitted "Perchance to Dream" to *Planet* on his own. Payne placed the story, under the title "Asleep in Armageddon," in the *Planet Stories* winter 1947–48 quarterly issue (designated S1); neither the title illustration nor the "Helen King" interior sketch are attributed. Two complete typescripts (TS1 and TS2) post-date S1; collation indicates that they were made directly from S1 by or for Bradbury, perhaps for subsequent

serial or anthology sales. Both represent word-for-word transcriptions of the S1 published text, and have no authoritative impact on the transmission of the text.

"Perchance to Dream" was reprinted under the S1 title "Asleep in Armageddon" in Donald Wollheim's 1949 hybrid magazine-anthology *Avon Fantasy Reader #11* (S2), the February 1952 issue of British *Argosy* (S3, with a two-page title illustration by Fischer), the 15 May 1953 issue of Britain's *Authentic Science Fiction #33* (S4), and Australia's 1955 *Beyond the Stars #211* (S5). The story has been anthologized three times, in *Possible Worlds of Science Fiction* (1951; in Britain, 1952), as the title story of the British anthology *Asleep in Armageddon* (1962), and in *Between Time and Terror* (1995).

The story had a harder time finding a home in any of Bradbury's story collections. As "Asleep in Armageddon" it was slated for *The Illustrated Man* (1951), but Bradbury decided to exchange it with "Kaleidoscope" in Groff Conklin's Vanguard anthology, *Possible Worlds of Science Fiction*, allowing "Kaleidoscope" to appear in *The Illustrated Man* instead. It was next scheduled to appear in *A Medicine for Melancholy* (1959), but was one of five stories discarded prior to publication. Rupert Hart-Davis, preparing to publish the British edition of this collection, worked with Bradbury to delete another four stories from the American contents, including the title story, in an effort to make the collection more appealing to English readers.

"Asleep in Armageddon," under its original typescript title "Perchance to Dream" (a quotation from Hamlet's third soliloquy), was one of the replacement stories in the renamed British edition, *The Day It Rained Forever* (*DRF*[1959]); the light revisions, intended to add scientific verisimilitude to story details and eliminate some of the American slang or allusions, represent editorial impositions rather than authorial changes. For the time being, this story remained uncollected in America under either of its titles. Bradbury initially included this story, as "Perchance to Dream," in the tentative contents for *The Machineries of Joy* (1964); it was cut from the galleys, however, and did not appear in an American collection until his retrospective compilation *Bradbury Stories* (*BS*[2003]), a half-century after it was first written.

Although it post-dates the period of initial composition, the S1 serial publication stands as copy-text. S1 may reflect revisions dating from Bradbury's postwar maturity as a science fiction writer, but the carefully crafted suspense and unsettling atmosphere of the original composition come through as superior to his other wartime submissions to the science fiction pulps. Substantive revisions that descend down from S1 through S2–S5 and through *DRF* and *BS* are relegated to the historical collation, as they represent subsequent (and very accessible) intentions for the story. Since "Perchance to Dream" represents his original settled intention for a title as well as his occasional published title, "Asleep in Armageddon" is relegated to a parenthetical subtitle for this volume.

The oceanic eeriness and tidal pull of the alien minds in "Perchance to Dream" would surface again in Bradbury's postwar story "The Women" (1947; published 1948). Bradbury would develop similar terrors emerging from alien encounters on seemingly dead planets in several of the dark science fiction tales that he published in the late 1940s and early 1950s, most clearly in his 1949 tales "The Lonely Ones" and "The One Who Waits." The basic mind invasion situation of "Perchance to Dream" was also inspired by two stories published by his mentor and close friend Leigh Brackett just before and during the time that he was developing his tentative TSπ draft materials: "The Demons of Darkside" (1941) and, more directly, "The Sorcerer of Rhiannon" (1942), a story that Bradbury acknowledged as influential on his imagination as he wrote the story.

Sources: Author's sales record (1941–49); author's sales-by-publisher indexes (c. Feb. 1943 and c. 1950); author's notecard story file; Bradbury to Hamilton and Brackett, c. Nov. 1951 (ENMU); Eller-Bradbury interviews; Ashley, 193–94; Tymn and Ashley, 476–81 (Clareson); Eller, *Becoming Ray Bradbury*, pp. 68–69.

—JE

Textual Notes

47.13 The air was breathable] It is likely that the British copy-editor for *DRF*, rather than Bradbury, made changes here and at 47.26 to correct Bradbury's implied situational premise that a "planetoid" in the asteroid belt beyond Mars could have the mass required for a breathable atmosphere.

47.27 ask?] The many subsequent rhetorical questions embedded in the stream of consciousness thoughts exchanged between Leonard Sale, his own conscience, and his tormentors generally close with a question mark; the emendation brings this first instance in line with Bradbury's usage at the other points.

51.5 Death came.] In S1, this paragraph and the next are separated by six stars; no other section breaks carry such ornaments, suggesting either an internal section break or a compositor's insertion to adjust spacing. These stars are silently regularized to the three-dot configuration used in the present edition to indicate section breaks in the copy-text.

51.32–35 "How long . . . survive?"] The thought-dialog between Sale and his ancient tormentors is clustered, with minimal paragraph breaks, throughout the S1 copy-text. The S3 editorial attempt to break out some of these exchanges into alternating dialog paragraphs is not authorial, and is not emended into the copy-text.

56.39–40 waiting for the door to lid open] The oddly-verbed noun "lid" represents a typical Bradbury action description, and is retained.

Emendations

47.14 two months'] S2; two month's S1
*47.27 ask?] S3; ask. S1
49.41 twelve-thirty] S2; ~ ^ ~ S1
52.12 today."] S2; today.^ S1
52.14 mentalities] S2; mentelities S1
52.34 The whirling.] S2; the whirling. S1
57.30 sleep.] S2; sheep. S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

47.*[title]* Asleep in Armageddon] S1; Perchance to Dream *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.3 power] S1; powers *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.12 pried] S1; prised *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
*47.13 The air was breathable. An instant's] S1; His suit was intact; his oxygen breathable. A few minutes' *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
◊47.14 two month's] S1; two months' S2, S4, S5, *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.14 of food with him.] S1; of oxygen and food. *DRF*^{1963}
47.14 Fine, fine!] S1; Fine! *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.14–15 fingered at] S1; prowled through *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.17 SEND HELP. SALE. SEND HELP.] S1; HELP. SALE. HELP. *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.18 The reply came instantly:] S1; Minutes passed; the reply came: *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.23 *La!* He clapped his hands.] S1; *Voilà!* he shouted. *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.25 he would read,] S1; *om.* S3, S4, S5
*◊47.27 ask.] S1; ask? S3, S4, S5, *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.27–28 The happy smell of breakfast filled the air.] S1; He touched the machinery in his helmet that popped food into his mouth. *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.29 out.] S1; out through the special helmet tube. *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
47.30 life!] S1; life. S5
47.30 Luck. Sheer luck.] S1; Luck, sheer luck! *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
48.3–6 eyes. ¶ | ¶ INSANITY] S1; eyes. ¶ Insanity S4, S5
48.10 voices, far] S1; voices far *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
48.16 He put his hands to his ears.] S1; *om. DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
48.27 *he's mine!*] S1; *he's mine; he's mine! DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
48.28 *he's* mine!] S1; *he's mine!* S5; mine, he's mine! *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
48.29 ours!] S1; *ours! DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
48.34 Far away] S1; Far-away *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
48.36 *Ours, ours!*] S1; *Ours, ours, DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
49.7 God's name,] S1; heaven's name, S5
49.9–12 Silence. ¶ | ¶ HE STOOD] S1; Silence. He stood S3, S4, S5; Silence. ¶ He stood *DRF*

49.13 Insane.] S1; Insane! *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

49.15 it, spilled gushes of it down his shirt.] S1; it through the helmet tube greedily. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

49.21 Ordinary, ordinary place.] S1; Ordinary, ordinary, ordinary place. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

49.29–32 normal. ¶ | ¶ THE] S1; normal. ¶ The S3, S4, S5

49.32 blue.] S1; dark. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

49.34 he made] S1; he had made S4

49.35 sleep.] S1; sleep? S3, S4, S5, *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

49.40 can] S1; tin S4

49.40 canned] S1; tinned S3, S4

49.40 on it.] S1; on it, and pass it in through the helmet airlocks. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

50.5 song,] S1; songs, *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

50.7–8 that? ¶ He] S1; that? He S3, S4

50.12 himself.] S1; himself, aloud. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

50.15 "Liar,"] S1; "Liar!" *DRF*

50.19–20 said. ¶ He] S1; said. ¶ | ¶ He S3, S4

50.25 "Ye gods," cried his censor. "William Saroyan!"] S1; *om.* S3, S4

50.28 strong?] S1; *strong?* S5

50.31 you, can] S1; you—can *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

50.35 life was over] S1; life were over S3, S5

50.36 well,] S1; well; S3, S4, S5

50.41–51.1 insisted. ¶ He] S1; insisted. He S4

51.1 He was tired of messing around.] S1; *om.* S3

51.3 this damned nonsense] S1; this nonsense *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

51.29–30 Tylle. ¶ | ¶ LEONARD] S1; Tylle. ¶ Leonard S3, S4, S5

*51.32–35 "How long . . . survive?] S1; "How long is *time?*" ¶ "Ten thousand years?" ¶ "Perhaps." ¶ "Ten million years?" "Perhaps." ¶ "What are you? Thoughts, spirits, ghosts?" he asked. ¶ "All of those, and more." ¶ "Intelligences?" ¶ "Precisely." ¶ "How did you survive?" S3

52.11–12 But without senses, lacking eyes, ears, lacking touch, smell, and the rest? "Lacking] S1; "But without senses, lacking eyes, ears, lacking touch, smell, and the rest?" ¶ "Lacking S4, S5

52.13 Sale. "You] S1; Sale. ¶ "You S4, S5

◊52.14 mentelities.] S1; mentalities. S2, S3, S4, S5; souls. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

52.15 Sale. "Nevertheless,] S1; Sale. ¶ "Nevertheless, S3, S4, S5

52.18 "As if he had a right to resent!"] S1; *om.* S3, S4

52.23–24 "What do . . . us."] What do you want? "Solidity. Mass. Sensation again." You can't *both* have it. "We'll fight that out between us."

52.36 hurtled] S1; hurled *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

52.39 ears. Now] S1; ears. ¶ Now S3, S4

53.3 each other,] S1; one another, S3, S5
53.4 scrabbling,] S1; scabbling S5
53.11 cheeks and into his upraised, trembling fingers.] S1; cheeks. *DRF*
53.12 "God, God, help me, oh God, help me," he said.] S1; *om.* S5; "God, God, help me, oh God, help me!"
53.16 by the sun.] S1; by sun. S5
53.18 He wiped his stained fingers on his shirt, blindly, trying not to think.] S1; *om. DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
53.19 thought.] S1; told himself. *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
53.19 world.] S1; world! *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
53.22 who ever] S1; whoever *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
53.23 A lovely world.] S1; *om. DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
53.27 that."] S1; that!" S2
53.41 if not. There's] S1; if not . . . There's S3, S4, S5; if not—there's *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
54.2 stage?] S1; stage! S5
54.4 destroying curtains, ruining lines!] S1; destroying curtains! S3, S4
54.31 stay-wake] S1; stay-awake S3, S4, S5, *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
54.31 mouth] S1; mouthful S3, S4, S5
54.31–35 coffee. ¶ | ¶ WELL,] S1; coffee. ¶ Well, S4, S5
54.35–36 Tolstoy or Balzac, gin-rummy, coffee, tablets, walking, more Tolstoy, more Balzac, more gin-rummy, more solitaire.] S1; Tolstoi, gin rummy, coffee, tablets, walking, more Tolstoi, more gin rummy, more solitaire. S3, S4; Tolstoi or Balzac, gin rummy, coffee, tablets, walking, more Tolstoi, more Balzac, more gin rummy, more solitaire. S5
55.1 He was so exhausted he couldn't move.] S1; *om.* S5
55.9 into sleep?] S1; to sleep? S3, S5; into sleep? ¶ *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
55.16–17 And whichever won the battle, would take this ruin of an insane man, the shaking, laughing wild body,] S1; And whichever won the battle would take this ruin of an insane man, shaking, laughing, wild body, S5
55.19–22 Leonard Sale, . . . outlandish thoughts.] S1; *om.* S3, S4
55.21 worms of wars for] S1; worms for S5
55.21–22 and prostituted] S1; *om.* S5
55.24 cleft of rock,] S1; cleft rock, S3, S4
55.31 eardrum] S1; eardrums S2, S5
55.33 you, listen,] S1; you. Listen, S3, S4, S5
55.33 Sale.] S1; Eale S5
55.33–34 You, Iorr, you, too, Tylle! Iorr, you can] S1; You, Iorr, you too, Tylle! Iorr, you, you, too, Tylle! Iorr, you can S5
55.34 occupy me on] S1; take me over on S5
55.35 Saturdays.] S1; Saturday. *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
55.36 Okay?] S1; What'll you say, is it a *bargain,* Iorr, Tylle?" S3, S4

56.2 A pox on both your houses!] S1; *om.* S3, S4
56.3–6 slept. ¶ | ¶ He] S1; slept. ¶ He S3, S4, S5
56.14 wakening him.] S1; awakening him. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
56.16 He washed and bandaged the wound he had given himself.] S1; *om.* S5
56.16–17 himself. He] S1; himself. ¶ He S3
56.37–38 you." ¶ He] S1; you." He S3, S4
*56.39–40 door to lid open.] S1; door lid to open. S2; door to slide open. S3, S4, S5
56.40–41 open. ¶ "Goodbye, Iorr, goodbye,] S1; open. "Good-bye, Iorr, goodbye, S3, S5
57.10 "Quick,"] S1; "Quick!" *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
57.18 no *sedative!"*] S1; no sedatives!" *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
57.22 don't, *don't!"*] S1; don't, don't!' *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
◊57.30 sheep.] S1; sleep. S2, S3, S4, S5
57.33 more sedative?"] S1; more sedatives?" *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
57.37–38"Can you figure that?"] S1; "What d'you make of it?" S3, S4
58.2 expression.] S1; expression! *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
58.15 They smelled the sweet air of the planet and looked] S1; They looked *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

Line-End Hyphenation

47.12 air-/lock] airlock

7. Referent (June 9, 1943)

A brief burst of creativity in May and June 1943 led Bradbury to compose four science fiction and fantasy tales of mixed quality, including "Referent." His composition and submission log establishes a completion date of June 9, 1943, for a 3,500-word version of the tale. Like the other three stories in this group—"The Shape of Things" (selection 4), "Perchance to Dream" ("Asleep in Armageddon") (selection 6), and "The Calculator" ("Jonah of the Jove-Run") (selection 8)— "Referent" failed to sell until Bradbury recirculated it in 1947; his sales record includes a May 1947 entry for a $70 purchase by Leo Margulies of Standard Magazines, Inc., publisher of *Thrilling Wonder Stories*. The sales-by-publisher index confirms the sale price and the first publication of "Referent" in Sam Merwin's *Thrilling Wonder Stories*. Bradbury's file-card story index records mainstream market submissions to *Collier's* (February 1947) and the *Saturday Evening Post* (March 1947) prior to the pulp sale to Margulies. Bradbury sold all four of the deferred stories on his own around this time period, and these sales were commission-free.

The initial publication of "Referent" in the October 1948 issue of *Thrilling Wonder Stories* (S1) included a title illustration by Vincent Napoli. Bradbury's

newer and stronger story "The Square Pegs" appeared in the same issue; this circumstance, as well as his other story appearances in five of the six bimonthly 1948 issues, led Merwin to opt for the house pseudonym Brett Sterling as a by-line for the rather short "Referent." In spite of its brevity and relative obscurity in comparison to the many more significant stories he placed in *Thrilling Wonder* during the late 1940s, Bradbury took the time to significantly rewrite "Referent" for the Bleiler and Dikty multiple-author anthology *Imagination Unlimited* (designated *IU*; FBA, 1952; U.K., 1953). A Bradbury typescript (TS), comprising an intermediate stage of revision toward *IU*, survives in the Albright Collection. TS, and its further holograph revisions, represent by far the greatest part of the historical collation of post-copy-text substantives recorded below.

Bradbury held "Referent" out of his own story collections until 1959, when his British publisher, Rupert Hart-Davis, requested it as part of a remix of contents for *The Day It Rained Forever* (DRF), the British edition of *A Medicine for Melancholy*. Bradbury did not read proofs for the British edition, which was brought out simultaneously with the February 1959 release of *A Medicine for Melancholy*; perhaps without knowing of the *IU* revision, Hart-Davis (who was not a science fiction enthusiast) used the original S1 version instead.

Little is known of "Referent" between its 1943 composition and the initial publication more than five years later. In January 1946, Schwartz returned five Bradbury stories that had failed to sell during 1943 and had since been inactive; "Referent" was one of these. The S1 first publication of 1948 represents the closest surviving form to the unlocated circulating drafts of 1943, and stands as copy-text for the present edition. Corrections to S1's occasional mechanical errors (errors that cannot be attributed to Bradbury's idiomatic preferences) are emended from TS and *IU* (where these points were not eliminated by the large-scale revisions of 1952), and from *DRF*. The present edition returns the elusive S1 text to print in America for the first time in more than six decades, and documents Bradbury's further substantive revisions of 1952 in the selection's Historical Collation below.

The alien shape-changer and human child at the center of "Referent" both have analogs elsewhere in Bradbury's canon, including the protean Martian survivor of "Impossible" (1949, revised for *The Martian Chronicles* as "The Martian"), the projective illusionist and the quarantined Martian exiles of "The Visitor" (1948), and the father-and-son mind-transference of "The Playground" (1952); the vulnerability of the shape-changers provides the common thread between all these stories. Young Roby's distant backstory ("your mother is neurotic") has a parallel in the extreme neurosis of the mother who dominates her son's environment in "Jack-in-the-Box" (selection 19).

Sources: Author's sales record (1941–49); author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's first sales-by-publisher indexes (c. Feb. 1943); author's

notecard story file (c. 1943–1975); Schwartz to Bradbury, Jan. 28, 1946; Ashley, 187–89; Tymn and Ashley, 754–62 (Ewald and Ashley).

—JE

Textual Notes

59. The Vincent Napoli title illustration includes the caption "It was like a dream he had refused to record in his Freud book." This line represents an editorial condensation of a slightly longer sentence at 60.1–2.

59.3 the year 1997] Although his subsequent revisions for anthology publication post-date S1 by only two or three years, Bradbury advanced the setting from the late twentieth century to the early twenty-second century; in the process, he spread out the antecedent range of dates mentioned at 59.23 ("1920, 1930, and 1942") to extend beyond the first half of the twentieth century. These new dates, along with the rest of his revisions for subsequent anthology publication, are relegated to the list of post-copy-text substantives.

60.25 proves the teachers wrong.] The copy-text reading represents a common and acceptable idiomatic form. Since Bradbury's subsequent TS revision to "proves the teachers are wrong" is part of his later intention to revise the story rather than a correction to the earlier S1 version, it is relegated to the list of post-copy-text substantives.

62.4 The Sandman was gone.] In S1, this paragraph and the next are separated by six stars; only this section break and the section break at 65.11 carry such ornaments, suggesting either an internal section break or a compositor's insertion to adjust spacing. These stars are silently regularized to the three-dot configuration used in the present edition to indicate section breaks in the copy-text.

62.7 Mr. Grill stepped] Here and again in the next line ("Mr. Grill stopped,"), the abbreviated form "Mr." is emended for "Mister" for consistency with Bradbury's usage at five other points in the narrative proper. However, his use of "Mister" at two points in Roby's dialog (60.34 and 64.41) is retained to maintain the intended tone of the child's edgy and aggressive comments.

63.17 a long distance away.] Although Bradbury's subsequent TS revisions for anthology publication represent a subsequent authorial intention for the story, this particular TS change actually corrects an error in the S1 copy-text ("a long great distance away") created when he failed to cancel "great" after moving that modifier to the beginning of the next sentence. This necessary correction is emended into the copy-text.

63.39 name!] The copy-text reading is more of an angry and unreasoned assertion by the "referent" Sandman than a truly rhetorical question; Bradbury retained the emphatic punctuation in all later forms, and it is retained for the present edition as well.

65.7 ship controls] Bradbury's subsequent TS styling to "ship's controls" is part of his later intention to revise the story for anthology publication rather

than to make a correction to the earlier S1 version; since the original reading does not require the possessive form, his subsequent styling is relegated to the list of post-copy-text substantives.

Emendations

59.*[title]* Referent] *DRF*; Referent | By Brett Sterling S1
60.19 word] TS; world S1
60.34 this is another] TS; this another S1
61.32 He liked to] TS; Like to S1
*62.7 Mr. Grill stepped] CE; Mister Grill stepped *Also* 62.9 ("Mr. Grill stopped,")
*63.17 a long distance away.] TS; a long great distance away. S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

59.1 fidgeted.] S1; frowned. TS
59.2 on the shore.] S1; down the long shore. TS
59.2 green silence] S1; green and fitful silence TS
59.2 Orthopedic] S1; Orthopaedic *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
*59.3 1997,] S1; 2105, TS
59.3 Roby did] S1; Roby Morrison did TS
59.4 him was the garden] S1; him lay the quiet garden TS
59.4–5 prowled, all ten years of him. This was Meditation] S1; prowled, and this was the Meditation TS
59.6 With morning] S1; Each morning TS
59.7 dashed into showers,] S1; *om.* TS
59.8–9 Physiology. After Physiology he] S1; Physiology and after that he TS
59.9 underground and] S1; underground like a brown feather and TS
59.10 silly] S1; *om.* TS
59.11 island] S1; Island TS *Also* 7.17
59.13 Today, he was in furious rebellion.] S1; *om.* TS
59.13 the sea,] S1; the vast blue sea, TS
59.13–14 the sea's] S1; its TS
59.14 were dark] S1; darkened TS
59.17 Huh!] S1; *om.* TS
59.17 Commissary] S1; Comissary TS; Comissionary *DRF*^{1963}
59.18–19 birds. ¶ And,] S1; birds. And TS
59.21 Garden. Games some] S1; Concourse, games which some TS
59.21 Psychologist] S1; psychologists TS
59.21–22 nightmare haunted sleep.] S1; nightmarish slumber. TS; nightmare-haunted sleep. *DRF*, *DRF*^{1963}
59.22 This was the future! You] S1; This, after all, was the Future which people had predicted or untold centuries, and you TS
*59.23 year 1920, 1930, and 1942] S1; years 1900 and 1930 and 1955 TS

59.24 fresh, brisk, sanitary,] S1; clean, brisk, sanitary; TS
59.24 nasty old] S1; unhappy TS
59.26 Roby should] S1; All in all, Roby Morrison should TS
59.26 been in a perfect mood for something] S1; been ready for anything TS
59.29–30 wasn't. ¶ | ¶ WHEN] S1; was not. ¶ When TS; wasn't. ¶ When *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
59.30 only more] S1; only much more TS
59.31 stop on the hot green grass.] S1; stop half-hidden in the brush. TS
60.3–4 door popped wide] S1; door flew back TS
60.4 some 'thing'] S1; something TS
60.5 Some 'thing'.] S1; Something TS
60.6 Young eyes,] S1; The eyes of a child, TS
60.6 have to] S1; must TS
60.7 'thing'] S1; 'something'
60.7 was stepping from the sphere.] S1; which stepped from the spheroid. TS
60.11 certainty!] S1; certainty. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
60.12–13 star. ¶ The] S1; star. The TS
60.13 eyes. He trembled.] S1; eyes, and he was trembling. TS
60.14 *you.*" Roby was disappointed.] S1; *you,*" said Roby. TS
60.16 boiling] S1; hot TS
60.18 hands, legs, feet, body,] S1; fingers, legs, body TS
60.19 new. "Sand—man?"] S1; new. ¶ "Sand—man?" TS
◊60.19 world] S1; word TS, *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
60.20 flee,] S1; turn and run TS
60.21 "Yeah,"] S1; "Sure," TS
60.22 say that ghosts, goblins] S1; say, ghosts and goblins TS
60.24 kids] S1; children TS
*60.25 teachers wrong.] S1; teachers are wrong. TS
60.25 are] S1; *are* TS
60.25 Sandmen] S1; Sandman TS
60.27 frightened.] S1; afraid. TS
60.28 feeling his] S1; feeling of his TS
60.29 *name*] S1; name TS
60.30 "Huh?"] S1; "Why?" TS
60.33 Roby's little green cat-eyes slitted. "Say—"] S1; Roby backed off and squinted at the man. "Say . . ." TS
60.33–24 "Did Mister Grill] S1; 'Mr Grill *DRF*[1963]
60.34 this another] S1; this is another TS
60.34 those psychological] S1; those darned psychological TS
60.36 dark] S1; *om.* TS
60.36 forever] S1; for ever *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

60.37 food, education,] S1; his food, his education, TS
60.37–38 his mother, his father,] S1; his mother and father, TS
60.41 kicked violently] S1; kicked out violently TS
60.41 gasping:] S1; gasping. TS
61.1 "Listen. I'm not human, you are!" he shouted.] S1; "Listen, I'm not human. You're human," said the Sandman. TS; 'Listen. I'm not human! You are!' *DRF*[1963]
61.1–2 the flesh of all you here on this world!] S1; your flesh and the flesh of everyone here on this planet. TS
61.2 I—I am] S1; I—I'm TS
61.3 referent!"] S1; *referent*!" TS
61.4 More kicking from Roby.] S1; *om.* TS
61.8 form, be] S1; form, *you* could be TS
61.8–9 Like Freedom, Liberty, Humanity, or Time, Space and Justice!"] S1; You could be like Freedom, Justice, Liberty, Humanity, or Time, Space, and the Pursuit of Happiness!" TS; Like Freedom, Liberty, Humanity, or Time, Space, and Justice!" *DRF*[1963]
61.10 you; he's] S1; you! He's TS
61.11 malleable.] S1; pliable! TS
61.11 Earth,] S1; this world TS
61.12–13 anything into something."] S1; Anything into Something!" TS
61.14 alone," protested Roby. "I've] S1; alone. I've TS
61.14 I have to] S1; I've got to TS
61.14 He] S1; The boy TS
61.15 ears. ¶ | ¶ THE] S1; ears. ¶ The TS, *DRF*[1963]; ears. ¶ | ¶ The *DRF*
61.18 fearfully] S1; swiftly TS
61.18 if expecting] S1; if momentarily expecting TS
61.19 was beginning to tremble] S1; began to shiver TS
61.20 around] S1; round *DRF*
61.21 one bothers] S1; one here bothers TS
61.22 away," sniffed Roby.] S1; away!" TS
61.23–24 space ship,] S1; spaceship, *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
61.26 by the gods,] S1; Oh God, TS
61.27 with thought! This] S1; with some silly thought, this TS
61.27 back!] S1; back. TS
61.29 Earth, forever.] S1; your world forever. TS; Earth for ever. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
61.30 Sandman screamed, wept, shouted.] S1; Sandman wept and shouted. TS
61.30–31 wandered. He debated quietly with himself.] S1; wandered off in a quiet debate. TS
61.31 want most of all?] S1; most want from life? TS
61.31–32 island. Silly. They always caught you. What then?] S1; island. But they always caught you. So there was no use in thinking of escape. TS

61.32 maybe.] S1; then. TS
◊61.32 Like to] S1; He liked to TS
61.33 Yeah, that'd] S1; Yes, that would TS
61.33–34 or spin-the-bottle, or even just] S1; spin-the-bottle, or tag, or perhaps just TS
61.34 catch, all] S1; catch, silently, all TS
61.35 himself. Yeah. A red ball.] S1; himself. ¶ Yes. A red rubber ball. TS
61.36 cried, "Don't—"] S1; said, "Don't . . ." TS
61.38 ground.] S1; grass. TS
61.39 Up and down bounced the red rubber ball.] S1; It dribbled up and down and then rolled against Roby Morrison's right foot. TS
61.40 Roby] S1; him TS
61.40 the ball] S1; the forbidden ball TS
61.41 wall, caught] S1; wall, clumsily, and caught TS
61.41 it. "Gee!"] S1; it. "Watch me!" TS
62.5 Way off] S1; Far away TS
62.5 hot] S1; warm TS
62.5 garden] S1; garden, TS
62.5 a bonging noise sounded.] S1; a gong struck three times, softly. TS
62.6 was rushing up the tube] S1; rushed up the steel tube TS
62.7 hiss.] S1; whiff of steam whistling out. TS
62.7 rustled measuredly along the path.] S1; rustled along the flowered path-way. TS
*62.7 Mister] S1; Mr *DRF*[1963] *Also* 62.9
62.9 "Morning,] S1; "Good morning, TS
62.9 chubby] S1; plump TS
62.10 kicked. "What have you there,] S1; slapped. "What've you got there, TS
62.13 "Eh?" Grill's small blue eyes blinked, narrowing.] S1; "Why . . ." Mr. Grill's eyes narrowed and blinked. TS
62.13 "Why,] S1; "Yes, TS
62.14 saw—uh—er—"] S1; saw . . ." TS
62.15 ball some more.] S1; ball three more times. TS
62.16 Grill] S1; Mr. Grill TS
62.16 "Lunch] S1; "It's lunch TS
62.17 certain] S1; sure TS
62.17 games."] S1; games. Solitary games, you know, are considered anti-social and unhealthy—" TS
62.19 well, then, go on. Play.] S1; well, go on then. Play a little while. TS
62.19 Mr.] S1; Mr *DRF*[1963]
62.20–21 "Don't feel like playing." Roby sulked, shoving his sandal-tip into the dirt. Teachers spoiled everything. You couldn't vomit without permission.]

S1; "I'm done." Roby stopped suddenly. "I'm all through." ¶ "Oh, don't let my being here stop you, boy. " ¶ "I'm tired of people watching me, it spoils everything." TS

62.22 Grill tried to interest the boy. "If you] S1; "Well, boy, if you TS

62.22 now] S1; now, *DRF*

62.23 Chicago afterward."] S1; Chicago, afterward, if you're good." TS

62.24 no more no] S1; no more, no TS, *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

62.24 less," was Roby's acid reply.] S1; less." TS

62.25 approve of things, boy."] S1; appreciate my little gesture, son." TS

62.26 wait and see!"] S1; see if I don't!" TS

62.27 lad. We'll always] S1; lad, we'll only TS

62.28 Roby bit his lip, staring at] S1; Roby stared TS

62.29 ball.] S1; ball, curiously. TS

62.29–30 it kind of, sort of, well—*move*. Funny. He held] S1; it—move. All by itself. He thought he had seen the ball twist in his hand. Twist and shiver. He held TS

62.30 ball in his hand. The ball shivered.] S1; ball tight, tight. TS

62.31 Grill] S1; Mr. Grill TS *Also* 62.39

62.32 You have] S1; You've TS

62.32 it is] S1; it's TS

62.33 boy] S1; *om.* TS

62.34 change] S1; remedy TS

62.34 mother."] S1; mother—" TS

62.35 mother!"] S1; her!" TS; Mother!" *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

62.36 corrected Grill, quietly.] S1; Mr. Grill corrected. TS

62.37 hand,] S1; hands, *DRF*

62.39 for yourself] S1; on yourself TS

62.40 "You're god-damn] S1; "You're a goddam *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

63.1 Grill stiffened.] S1; *om.* TS

63.3 418,] S1; 418. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

63.4 "Now, I remember," shouted Roby, looking] S1; "*Now*, I remember!" cried Roby, gazing TS; "Now I remember!" shouted Roby, looking *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

63.6 "Lunch time."] S1; "Lunchtime." TS

63.10 plate] S1; plates TS

63.11 a heart] S1; a warm heart TS

63.11 gulped] S1; swallowed TS

63.12 food] S1; his food TS

63.12 swiftly.] S1; hastily. TS

63.12 feathers] S1; milkweed TS

63.14 Hours] S1; A number of long hours TS

63.15 garden to be alone.] S1; garden, at last, to be by himself. TS

63.15–17 Hatred for this insane, never-stopping routine, for his teachers and his fellow students flashed through him in a scouring torrent. He sat alone and thought of his mother,] S1; He sat alone and let his hatred for the island and the teachers and the routine scour through him. And then he thought of his mother, TS

*◊63.17 a long great distance away.] S1; a long distance awqy TS; a great distance away. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

63.18 and what she smelled like] S1; *om.* TS

63.20 small] S1; *om.* TS

63.21 the red] S1; the small red TS

63.22 only thought] S1; thought only TS

63.22 mother.] S1; mother and held his hands to his eyes. TS

63.23 jungle shivered.] S1; jungle garden shivered. TS

63.23 Something shifted, quickly.] S1; Something whirled and vapored in the clean air. TS

63.24 grass!] S1; grass. TS

63.26 toward] S1; towards *DRF Also* 63.28, 64.13

63.27 glittering thing.] S1; glitter. TS

63.27 ship! And] S1; ship! Hidden back in the ferns and bushes, the ship! And TS

63.28 sphere?] S1; ship? TS

63.29 get up.] S1; rise. TS

63.29–30 up. ¶ Roby] S1; up. Roby *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

63.30 rock, gave chase.] S1; rock and ran though the garden. TS

63.30 caught up with] S1; approached TS

63.32 he screamed.] S1; *om.* TS

63.33 shivered] S1; trembled TS

63.33–34 snow, then took on a hard cast, became definite and handsome.] S1; snow. Then it hardened and set, as he looked at it, and it was beautiful. TS

63.36 shaking] S1; *om.* TS

63.37 with shock] S1; *om.* TS

63.37 out his hands] S1; his hands out TS

63.38 understand?" her face was cold.] S1; understand," she said. TS

63.38 mother.] S1; mother! TS

63.39 get back to my ship] S1; go! TS

64.1–3 Roby swayed. "Mother, don't you know me? I'm Roby, your son!" He wanted only to cry against her, tell her of the long months of imprisonment. "Please, please, Mom, please remember me!"] S1; Roby stumbled. "Mother, it's me, it's Roby! It's been so long. It's been awful here. You don't know. A year now. I hate it. You *did* come to take me away, didn't you? Didn't you?" TS; Roby swayed. 'Mother, don't you know me? I'm Roby, your son!' He wanted

only to cry against her, tell her of the long months of imprisonment. 'Please remember me.' *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

64.4 he moved forward and fell against her.] S1; he fell forward against the woman. TS

64.7 caught, pressed] S1; caught and pressed TS

64.8 flailed his legs.] S1; kicked his legs and rolled. TS

64.9 her cold] S1; Her cold, *DRF*

64.9 even] S1; *om.* TS

64.10 tightened and] S1; tightened again and TS

64.10–11 dark. ¶ Deep] S1; dark. Deep TS

64.12 falling] S1; dropping TS

64.12 sphere,] S1; star, TS

64.13 'woman'] S1; woman TS

64.13 had been running.] S1; had run. TS

64.15 It all fitted!] S1; *om.* TS; It all fitted. *DRF*

64.16–17 ¶ Matrixes. Moulds. Thought habits. Patterns. Matter. The history of man, his body, all things in the universe.] S1; *om.* TS

64.18 ¶ She was killing him.] S1; And now, very methodically, she was killing him. TS

64.19 ¶ She would make him stop thinking, then she would be free.] S1; She would make him stop thinking, forever, and then she would be free. *It* would be free. TS

64.21 'it' was his mother. It wasn't. Nevertheless 'it' was killing him.] S1; it was a beautiful lady. A beautiful, beautiful lady. TS

64.21–22 What if Roby] S1; What if.. what if he TS

64.22 kicked.] S1; kicked and flailed. TS

64.23 thought, hard, hard.] S1; thought hard, then harder. TS; thought hard, hard. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

64.24 'mother'] S1; mother TS

64.24 withered before] S1; withered and dwindled before TS

64.26 dwindled] S1; melted TS

64.27–30 size. ¶ | ¶ HE] S1; size. ¶ He TS; size. ¶ | ¶ He *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

64.30 He rose up, gasping.] S1; He rolled away, over and over, then got to his feet, gasping. TS

64.30 jungle he] S1; jungle foliage, he TS

64.31 sun.] S1; afternoon light. TS

64.31 toward] S1; towards *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

64.31–33 it, then cried out with the sharp thrill of the plan that formed in his mind. ¶ He laughed triumphantly. He stared once more at 'it'.] S1; it, touched it, went around it in a groping circle, then, leaned against it, gazing

into the opened port, he began to smile. The smile grew upon itself as he rubbed his hand on the metal port. He began to laugh. TS

64.33–34 What was left of the woman form changed before his eyes, like melting wax.] S1; Turning, he stared at what was left of the woman and changed it again before his eyes. TS

64.34–35 He reshaped it into something new.] S1; He shaped it like clay into something fresh and new. TS

64.36 trembled.] S1; shook. TS

64.36 hissing] S1; gushing TS

64.37 Roby would have to hurry or his plan would be ruined.] S1; Roby Morrison glanced about quickly, startled. TS

64.38 Roby ran to the spheroid, peered in.] S1; He peered into the spheroid. TS

64.38–39 Simple controls. Just enough room for his small body—*if* the plan worked. It had to work. It would work.] S1; The controls looked simple enough—he had learned to fly a small rocket himself, a year ago, on his twelfth birthday, and the interior of this star was large enough for his small body. He hesitated. TS; Simple controls. Just enough room for his small body—if the plan worked. It had to work. It would work. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

64.40 trembled] S1; shuddered TS

64.40–65.3 Roby laughed. To hell with Mister Grill! To hell with the island! ¶ He thrust himself into the ship. There was much he could learn, it would come in time. He was just on the skirt of knowledge now, but that little knowledge had saved his life, and now it would do even more. ¶ A] S1; Roby shouted and shouted again, to himself, smiling, and thrust himself into the ship. A TS; Roby laughed. To hell with Mr Grill. To hell with the island. ¶ He thrust himself into the ship. There was much he could learn, it would come in time. He was just on the skirt of knowledge now, but that little knowledge had saved his life, and now it would do even more. ¶ A *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

65.4–5 So familiar that it made Roby shudder.] S1; *om.* TS

65.5 Roby] S1; He TS

65.5 small boy] S1; small child's TS; small-boy *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

65.5 crash the underbrush.] S1; crash through the moist underbrush. TS

65.6 body. A small voice pleading!] S1; body, and a small voice pleading behind him. TS; body. A small voice pleading. *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]

*65.7 ship] S1; ship's TS

65.7–8 Escape. Complete and unsuspected. Wonderful. Grill] S1; This then would be his escape, simple, complete, unsuspected, and wonderful. Mr. Grill TS

65.9 sphere door slammed. Motion.] S1; ship door slammed shut. TS

65.10 Roby inside,] S1; Roby Morrison inside, TS

65.13 struck him warmly in the] S1; shone warmly in his TS

65.14 Roby. In] S1; Roby, in TS

65.15 nobody] S1; no one TS
65.17 called Grill.] S1; said Mr. Grill. TS
65.30 ¶ "I'm a referent, I'm *not* a label!" cried the child.] S1; *om.* TS
65.31 understand.] S1; see. TS
65.32 there, now, while I, while I, while I] S1; there, boy, while I, while I TS
65.34 "God damn you all!"] S1; "Damn you all!" *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
65.34 "Damn you!"] S1; *om.* TS; "God damn you!" *DRF*, *DRF*[1963]
65.35 declared Grill] S1; said Mr. Grill, TS
65.35 vac-cylinder.] S1; vacuum-cylinder. TS
65.36 referent!"] S1; referent." TS
65.37 sucked them away.] S1; took them away into the earth. TS
65.38 A star blinked on the summer sky and vanished.] S1; On the summer sky, a star blinked and vanished. TS

Line-End Hyphenation

61.33 psycho-/supervision] psycho-supervision

8. The Calculator (Jonah of the Jove-Run) (June 17, 1943)

The textual history for "The Calculator" is obscured by two title changes prior to publication. Bradbury's composition and submission log entry carries the original typescript title, "All Down the Line," a recorded length of 5,000 words, and a completion date of June 17, 1943. Bradbury's marginal holograph note ("SOLD—1947") was added much later, when this group of late spring 1943 stories—including "The Shape of Things" (selection 4), "Perchance to Dream" ("Asleep in Armageddon") (selection 6), and "Referent" (selection 7)—were recirculated and finally sold; all four were published during 1948.

Bradbury's sales record entry appears as "The Calculator," the title under which the tale was circulated and eventually sold to *Planet Stories* for $90 in March 1947. Bradbury's notecard story files include a card for "The Calculator" that confirms the March 1947 sale date and the original 1943 title as "All Down the Line." The published title first appears in Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index as [sic]"Jonah of the Jove Run," which confirms the sale price and the Spring 1948 publication date in *Planet Stories* (S1). This story formed part of an intermediate plateau in his development as a science fiction writer that included most of his earliest sales to both *Thrilling Wonder* and *Planet*; Bradbury never placed it in any of his story collections, and held it out of multiple-author anthologies as well.

The 1947 resurrection of this quartet of unsold 1943 stories coincided with Bradbury's amicable transition away from Julius Schwartz, who had represented nearly all of his professional pulp sales since 1941. Bradbury circulated a

number of stories on his own until the fall of 1947, when Don Congdon became his agent. He was now in demand among the major market magazine editors, and at the beginning of 1947 he sent "The Calculator" to Innes MacCammond at *USA*, a new slick magazine scheduled to begin publication as a subsidiary of the Marshall Fields business empire. But the magazine failed before the first issue, and MacCammond returned the story in February 1947. By this time the story was with Paul Payne at *Planet Stories*, who forwarded it to his contacts at *Collier's* for major market consideration; this gambit didn't pan out, and Payne immediately purchased "The Calculator" for *Planet Stories* in March 1947.

As the purchase title implies, "The Calculator" centered on the computational skills of an interplanetary freighter's astrogator, a now-obsolete 1940s and 1950s genre term for a navigator who must negotiate the orbital and gravitational hazards of interplanetary space travel. His character, an alcoholic pariah of the space lanes who must prove himself in one final desperate rescue mission, shows the strong influence of Leigh Brackett, his closest mentor during the war years. She read it, probably under the working title "All Down the Line," in early June 1943, during one of their regular Sunday meetings on the Santa Monica beach. In mid-June she sent him a critique of the story's shortcomings with her usual frankness:

> There's no feeling of genuine urgency. The conflict isn't clear cut . . . and most of all the position of the old man on the ship doesn't seem convincing. Apparently they had calculators in working order. Why drag in such an untrustworthy variable as a drunken old bum? Particularly in a machine age! . . . If, however, there is a powerful personal reason why every man on that ship wants to get to Jupiter, and their calculators blow, let's say through sabotage perhaps, and only old What's His Name can get them through, then I could believe you. As it is, the whole thing is too vague and fuller of holes than last year's socks, and adds up generally to So What?

The lack of technological verisimilitude would always be a problem in Bradbury's science fiction settings, but Brackett appreciated the emotional potential that he was trying to invest in the ragged little protagonist: "I still like the old man, but he needs a better frame." Many of her own hard-luck protagonists dominated wartime and early post-war issues of *Planet Stories*, and Bradbury would soon find his first sustained success for his slowly improving science fiction tales in the pages of this sturdy middle-tier science fiction pulp. In the late 1940s, as he began to place his better stories with *Thrilling Wonder*, he still found a home for some of his earlier unsold tales at *Planet*.

"Jonah of the Jove-Run" appears to be an editorially-imposed title designed to alliterate and dramatize the specific challenges facing the story's doomed

protagonist. "The Calculator," typical of the single noun or "word association" titles found throughout Bradbury's early career, was clearly his own choice to replace "All Down the Line" after he incorporated Brackett's suggested revisions to what she had called his "Human Calculator yarn." In the absence of any pages from the original draft of 1943, or even a submitted 1947 typescript for "The Calculator," the S1 published form stands as copy-text. Bradbury's submitted title is emended into the copy-text; the published title is retained in parenthesis as a subtitle, so that the bibliographical history of the story is not obscured. With no known subsequent forms of the text, any emendation to obvious errors within the text are made by the editors of the present edition.

Sources: Author's sales record (1941–49); author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales-by-publisher indexes (c. Feb. 1943 and c. 1950; author's notecard story file (c. 1943–75); Leigh Brackett to Bradbury, postcard, n.d. (postmarked June 15, 1943); Eller–Bradbury interviews; Ashley, 193–94; Tymn and Ashley, 476–81 (Clareson).

—JE

Textual Notes

66.2 *Terra*] Here and at 66.18, S1 carries over Bradbury's usual habit of capitalizing words (such as book titles and ship names) that require italics in print. His typescripts (and especially his typed correspondence) reflect this general practice, even though S1 presents the ship's name in roman type at three subsequent points. Emendation to title case italics at all these points provides consistency and is inline with Bradbury's discernible preferences of the period.

66.20–21 Nibley . . . time."] Bradbury's occasional habit of stacking dialog exchanges between characters into a single paragraph appears here and in several other stories of this period, including "Perchance to Dream" ("Asleep in Armageddon") (selection 6). This is clearly an intended strategy, and is retained here and at other points (69.27–30, 72.27–32) where dialog stacking occurs.

68.2 Captain,"] S1 offers no consistent pattern in styling "captain" as either lower-case or title case. Given the tendency for house-styling by his pulp editors, the lack of consistency here most likely reveals Bradbury's underlying inconsistency as well. In the absence of any discernible authorial preference, "Captain" is emended to title case here and at subsequent points where the ship's captain is addressed directly or identified in context.

Emendations

66.*[title]* The Calculator (Jonah of the Jove-Run)] CE; Jonah of the Jove-Run | By Ray Bradbury S1

*66.2 *Terra*] CE; TERRA S1 *Also* 66.18

67.7 loudspeaker] CE; loud speaker S1

67.8 *Terra*] CE; Terra S1 *Also* 67.23, 70.17
69.19 set of radar computators;] CE; set or radar computators; S1
75.16 "Turn] CE; ^Turn S1
78.2 Nibley] CE; Nobley S1
78.4–5 guiding them.] CE; guiding theme. S1
78.8 "Yep," he said.] CE; "Yep." he said. S1

Line-End Hyphenation

70.13 star-/tracks] star-tracks
76.22 head-/phones] headphones
76.34 off-/spring] offspring

9. The Emissary (June 23, 1943)

The widely reprinted 1955 *October Country* version of "The Emissary" has long overshadowed the story's elusive origins, which survive in two far earlier forms of the text. Bradbury's composition log includes a completion and probable submission date of June 23, 1943, along with a typed marginal note declaring "Sold to UNKNOWN on July 14th." His sales record confirms the sale, and adds a projected pre-commission price of $35.00 in his hand. Nolan's listing of sales by Julius Schwartz includes the same date of sale and the actual pre-commission payment of $32.00. Bradbury's sales-by-publisher record does not include the story; this listing was prepared around 1950, long after the events that prevented Bradbury's first and only sale to *Unknown Worlds* from reaching serial publication in the 1940s.

Bradbury's off-trail childhood fantasies were always hard to place in *Weird Tales*, but Julius Schwartz, who personally liked this aspect of his client's fiction, had high hopes that "The Emissary" would sell to *Weird*'s major competition over at Street & Smith: John W. Campbell's *Unknown Worlds*. Selling to Campbell was never an easy proposition—between 1941 and the summer of 1943 he had turned down a number of Bradbury stories for *Astounding Science Fiction*, but he had recently purchased "Doodad" for *Astounding*—Bradbury's first regular sale to a Campbell magazine. Campbell felt that Bradbury was a better fit for *Unknown Worlds*, the fantasy-oriented pulp he had founded, in part, as a competitor for *Weird Tales*. Schwartz was able to negotiate the sale of "The Emissary" for *Unknown* in mid-July 1943; true to form, however, Campbell turned down Schwartz's *Astounding* submission of "The Shape of Things" (selection 4) in the same letter.

Bradbury's celebration was short-lived. Wartime paper rationing had already caused casualties among the genre pulps, and after the October 1943 issue Campbell reluctantly suspended publication of *Unknown* for the dura-

tion of the war; it would never return to print, and by early 1946 Bradbury was able to secure a release based on this circumstance. He pulled "The Emissary" into his June 1946 submission of *Dark Carnival* (designated *DC*), his first story collection, where it reached print without prior periodical publication in May 1947. For *DC*, Bradbury focused his revisions on the stories that had already appeared in magazines; although no pre-publication pages of "The Emissary" are known, his subsequent actions with this story suggest that the *DC* version is very close to the original text purchased for *Unknown*.

By 1951 Martha Foley, who had featured Bradbury titles in two of her *Best American Short Story* annuals, persuaded him to place two of his hard-to-publish pieces in the Paris-based writer's magazine *New Story*: "The Other Foot" (February 1951), which would earn a third *BASS* selection, and "The Emissary" (July 1951). The *New Story* appearance of "The Emissary" (S1) represented another step into the mainstream literary market, and Bradbury carefully revised and compressed the *DC* version prior to S1 publication. S1's significant revisions proved to be a point of departure for a comprehensive rewriting of "The Emissary" for his 1955 story collection *The October Country* (*OC*); for *OC*, Bradbury completed the evolution of his early weird fantasies (the process he had begun in *DC*) by finally rewriting "The Emissary" and "Jack-in-the-Box" (selection 19), refining his 1947 rewrite of "The Man Upstairs" (selection 12), and revising a dozen more *DC* stories that he also pulled forward into *OC*. The revisions and cuts found in S1 play into the *OC* rewrite, but a parallel analysis of *DC* and *OC* indicate that Bradbury worked primarily from the *DC* text, including some passages he had removed from S1. In the process, Bradbury shifted the canine "emissary" further into the dark fantastic by replacing his familiar family-given name "Torry" with the more mysterious and elemental name of "Dog."

Consequently, the *OC* version of "The Emissary" is a distinct version of its own, representing a new intention: to showcase the story in a collection that offered a finely-tuned backward glance to a kind of story he no longer wrote. Bradbury and his agent, Don Congdon, insured that subsequent magazine appearances were based on the *OC* text, including *Shock* (S2, July 1960); the hybrid magazine-anthology *Weird Worlds 6* (S3, 1980), *Scholastic Voice* (S4, Oct. 16, 1987), and *Scholastic Scope* (S5, Oct. 18, 1991). Subsequent Bradbury collections containing "The Emissary" also derive directly from the *OC* version; these include the 1975 British collection *Ray Bradbury* (RB), the 1980 100-story retrospective *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* (*SRB*), and *SRB*'s British reissues and editions (*SRB*^{1983} and *RBS1*). The dozen multiple-author anthology appearances all post-date *OC*, and generally descend from the *OC* version: *Best Tales of Terror [One]* (U.K., 1962); *The Fourth Pan Book of Horror Stories* (U.K., 1963; U.S., 1970); *The Hounds of Hell* (1974); *The Hell of Mirrors* (U.K., 1974); *Ghostly and Ghastly* (U.K., 1977); *A Dog's Life* (1978); *Thrillers, Chillers,*

and Killers (1979); *Ghosts That Haunt You* (U.K., 1980); *Roger Caras' Treasury of Great Dog Stories* (1987); *Ghost Stories* (U.K.) 1988; *Dark Voices* (U.K.) 1990.

Although it closely follows the original *DC* story structure, the completely rewritten *OC* version of "The Emissary" represents an entirely new text and an entirely different textual genealogy. Copy-text for the present edition is the rarely-seen *DC* text, which represents the closest known form to the original submission purchased for the ill-fated *Unknown Worlds* in the summer of 1943. The S1 revisions, which begin the movement toward the *OC* rewrite, are included in the historical collation of post-copy-text substantives. The *OC* rewrite, and the individual variants that descend from it, are so divergent that they are uncollatable, and are not included in the present edition. In this way we are able to focus on recovering, as far as possible, Bradbury's original intentions through the single filtering lens of *DC*.

The composition of "The Emissary" marked the beginning of a short interval away from writing science fiction in mid-1943. Similar light horror stories and detective tales would occupy him until early 1945; in fact, he would complete only two science fiction stories during the rest of 1943, and only two more during 1944. "The Emissary" was inspired by memories of his bout with whooping cough in the second grade, an illness that kept him bed-ridden for three months during the fall of 1928, and memories of the family dog during those years. The premature death of his fifth-grade teacher, Impi Johnson, several years after his 1934 departure from Waukegan, provided the emotional tug leading to the story's shocking conclusion. Bradbury's more direct telling of the loss of his beloved teacher became the basis for "These Things Happen" (1951).

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Schwartz to Bradbury, c. late June and July 15, 1943; Tymn and Ashley, 694–99.

—JE

Textual Notes

80.38 WHO IS SICK?] In revising for S1 and again in the rewritten *OC* text, Bradbury established Martin's age by extending the emissary's dog tag to read "WHO IS TEN YEARS OLD AND SICK." Martin is two years older than Bradbury was when he was bedridden with whooping cough, a touch that makes Martin's strong imaginative powers more believable. 81.21–23 Miss Haight! . . . Martin had company.] The contentious wrangling with Arkham House founder August Derleth over *DC*'s galley corrections may have led to the absence of this crucial identifier in the copy-text. The visitor's name is not present in *DC*, greatly compromising reader comprehension of the "second" visit by the corpse of Miss Haight at the end of the story, where, once again, the scene closes with "Martin had company." Bradbury

restored the sentence in S1, and carried it as well into his comprehensive rewrite for *OC*. Since this vital sentence was clearly intended to be part of his original intention in *DC*, it is emended into the copy-text.

82.38 The war, and all.] "The Emissary" was written during World War II, but this time frame reference only appears in the *DC* text. Bradbury's deletion of the passage in S1 and *OC* suggests his desire to free "The Emissary" from any specific time and place, a strategy that is also manifest in many of his other early light horror tales.

Emendations

80.13 Miss Tarkins's] CE; Miss Tarkin's *DC*

*81.21 Miss Haight!] S1; *not present DC*

83.36 Miss Tarkins] S1; Mrs. Tarkins *DC Also* 83.40

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

79.1 came romping] *DC*; ran S1

79.2 smell of autumn] *DC*; autumn smell S1

79.3 he] *DC*; Torry S1

79.3–4 his . . . tail.] *DC*; his ears and white vest and flourished on his tail. S1

79.4–5 The . . . autumn.] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.6 with] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.7–8 and displayed . . . Torry] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.9 "Because . . . as] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.9 Torry leaped upon the bed.] *DC*; Torry leaped upon the bed, to warm Martin's thin body with his dog warmness. S1

79.10–11 "Get . . . then."] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.12 Torry . . . warmness.] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.12–13 Martin . . . quilt.] *DC*; Fallen leaves littered the quilt. S1

79.13–14 He . . . scolded.] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.14 After all,] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.15 reborn . . . cold.] *DC*; fresh and cold. S1

79.18 had] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.19–20 the compact . . . gone—] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.22 But . . . knew.] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.23–24 ran shouting] *DC*; shouted S1

79.24 and roller skates] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.25 ran,] *DC*; had run. S1

79.25 barking out his canine delight.] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.25–27 And . . . went.] *DC*; And into town, and out in the country, barking. S1

79.28 wherever] *DC*; where ever S1

79.29 the touch, feel, consistency,] *DC*; *om.* S1

79.29 dry, or crispness] *DC*; dry, the crispness S1
79.30 And, lying there] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.4–7 Mother's . . . before] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.7–9 and Mom . . . firmly.] *DC*; Mother entered with a tray of salads and orange juice, her blue eyes snapping. S1
80.10–12 "Is . . . impatiently.] *DC*; She frowned at the dog. S1
80.12 dog is] *DC*; dog's S1
◊80.13 Tarkin's] *DC*; Tarkins S1
80.14 big] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.15–17 "Oh . . . Mom.] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.17 "This is] *DC*; "That's S1
80.17 he's] *DC*; Torry's S1
80.19 looking] *DC*; *looking* S1
80.20 "Something] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.20 He's just a curious nuisance.] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.21 black] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.22–23 There . . . ended,] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.23 stop digging in yards] *DC*; behave S1
80.24 in and not let him run."] *DC*; locked up." S1
80.25–26 Then I wouldn't know—anything.] *DC*; Then I wouldn't—know." He hesitated and looked at his hands. "I wouldn't know—anything. S1
80.26 He *tells* me."] *DC*; He—he *tells* me." S1
80.27 Mom's voice softened.] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.27 son?"] *DC*; son?" Mom quieted her voice. S1
80.28 "Sure.] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.28–29 tells what happens, tells everything!"] *DC*; tells me everything that happens!" S1
80.30–31 Mom's . . . him."] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.32 a moment] *DC*; *om.* S1
80.32–33 how worthless the last year would've been without Torry.] *DC*; of what worth the dog had been in the months of illness. S1
80.33–34 Only . . . around.] *DC*; "Well, he can go out, if he *stops digging*," said Mom. S1
80.36–37 the special . . . square:] *DC*; a painted tin note to Torry's collar: S1
*80.38–39 WILL YOU VISIT MY MASTER, WHO IS SICK? FOLLOW ME!"] *DC*; FOLLOW ME AND VISIT MY MASTER, WHO IS TEN YEARS OLD, AND SICK. S1
80.40–81.3 It worked . . . barked.] *DC*; Mother let the dog out. S1
81.6–7 the dog . . . visitors.] *DC*; him barking away down the street to fetch visitors with his painted note jingling on his collar. Yesterday, Torry had fetched Mr. Holloway and Mr. Jacobs, and the day before *three* visitors! The painted message worked! S1

81.7–8 Martin . . . faster.] *DC*; Martin was feverish, listening, propped up, sending his mind rushing out with the dog. S1

81.8–12 Yesterday . . . how-do-you-do.] *DC*; *om.* S1

81.13 Martin] *DC*; he S1

81.15–16 Somebody . . . softly.] *DC*; The downstairs bell rang. S1

81.17 Torry . . . bed.] *DC*; *om.* S1

81.18 come upstairs this] *DC*; come up the stairs *this* S1

81.18–19 Maybe . . . or—] *DC*; *om.* S1

◊81.21 laugh in it.] *DC*; laugh in it. Miss Haight! S1

81.26–28 morning . . . visitors.] *DC*; morning and afternoon temperatures, brought visitors. S1

81.29 Miss Haight, again, on Saturday.] *DC*; Miss Haight came again on Saturday. S1

81.29–30 She was . . . walking.] *DC*; She was young . . . laughing, handsome, with gleaming brown hair and a soft way of talking. S1

81.30–33 She lived . . . Hendricks.] *DC*; *om.* S1

81.34–37 And . . . out.] *DC*; And to her, Martin explained how in spring Torry was odorous with wild flowers and fresh earth; in summer how he was baked, warm, sun-crisp; in autumn, now, a treasure trove of gold leaves for Martin to explore out. S1

81.37–38 Torry . . . explored.] *DC*; *om.* S1

81.39 one morning,] *DC*; a few days later, S1

81.39–40 the one . . . laughed.] *DC*; the handsome one, the young one, the woman who laughed. S1

82.2–4 the way . . . people.] *DC*; her smile, her bright eyes, her fine stories. S1

82.5 So now she was dead.] *DC*; *om.* S1

82.5 She . . . more.] *DC*; She wouldn't be telling stories any more. S1

82.9–14 "You . . . be."] *DC*; *om.* S1

82.17–19 "I . . . know."] *DC*; It doesn't sound like much fun. S1

82.20 "Sometimes] *DC*; "Some times *S1*

82.22–23 throw dirt in their faces and] *DC*; *om.* S1

82.24–26 What . . . Torry?"] *DC*; If I tell Torry to play dead dog he does it awhile and then gets sick of it and wags his tail or pants or jumps off the bed, and I bet those graveyard people do the same thing, huh, Torry?" S1

82.27 Torry barked.] *DC*; *om.* S1

82.28 like] *DC*; *like* S1

82.31 The autumn] *DC*; Autumn S1

82.31 across forests,] *DC*; across the forests, S1

82.31 prowling] *DC*; prowled S1

82.32 and around] *DC*; *om.* S1

82.34 mid-October,] *DC*; late October, S1

82.34–35 He . . . begging.] *DC*; *om.* S1

82.36 in a row] *DC*; *om.* S1
82.36–37 Martin was deeply despondent over it.] *DC*; *om.* S1
*82.38 The war, and all.] *DC*; *om.* S1
82.40 said Martin,] *DC*; Martin was despondent. S1
82.41 than that to it.] *DC*; to it than that. S1
83.2 out.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.2–3 Maybe . . . fine.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.5 Martin . . . anxiously.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.6 he] *DC*; Martin S1
83.6–8 It . . . Nothing.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.8–9 Torry wasn't coming home—ever.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.10–11 Martin . . . chest.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.13–14 There would . . . snow.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.14 The go-between] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.15 thronging] *DC*; throngings S1
83.15 probably] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.16 and there was no time.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.22–23 the bogeys . . . year.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.23 Hallowe'en . . . untouchable.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.24–26 he had . . . all.] *DC*; he heard horns blowing off in the cold autumn stars, windows thumped with cabbages, children yelling, that was all. S1
83.27–29 Martin . . . window.] *DC*; November shifted in alternate light and dark across the window for three days. S1
83.29–30 tempo and temperature.] *DC*; tune. S1
83.30 his] *DC*; Martin's S1
83.30 nothing more.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.32–33 Martin . . . non-existent.] *DC*; *om.* S1
83.33 but didn't] *DC*; but he didn't S1
83.33 the sounds] *DC*; the barking sound S1
83.35 were going] *DC*; kissed him good night and walked out of the house into the autumn, to go S1
83.35–39 They'd . . . street.] *DC*; *om.* S1
◊83.36 Mrs.] *DC*; Miss S1
83.38 goodnight] *DC*; good night DC^{1948}
84.1 there and watched] *DC*; there, watching S1
84.1 moving] *DC*; move S1
84.3–5 graveyard . . . dreams.] *DC*; graveyard, through the shadowed streets. S1
84.6–8 Only . . . Martin.] *DC*; *om.* S1
84.9 o'clock.] *DC*; *om.* S1
84.10 some] *DC*; something S1
84.11 burr or a rimed] *DC*; burr, a rimed S1

84.11 If . . . home.] *DC*; *om.* S1
84.12 And] *DC*; *om.* S1
84.13 in his covers] *DC*; *om.* S1
84.13–14 Starlight . . . eyes.] *DC*; *om.* S1
84.14 He . . . listening.] *DC*; He listened. S1
84.20–21 The sound of a dog circling and running.] *DC*; *om.* S1
84.21–22 faded, it came forward and went back,] *DC*; faded, came forward, went back, S1
84.23 the chestnut] *DC*; the dark chestnut S1
84.25 Martin . . . body.] *DC*; Martin felt the bed tremble under him. S1
84.26–27 The springs . . . louder.] *DC*; *om.* S1
84.28 *Torry, come home!*] *DC*; *om.* S1
84.29 *Oh, Torry, Torry!*] *DC*; *Come home!* S1
84.30 and Martin kept saying] *DC*; as Martin said S1
84.31 off and leave him for] *DC*; and run off S1
84.32–33 come home, oh, Torry, hurry home and tell me about the world! Tears fell and dissolved into the quilt.] *DC*; Tears fell and dissolved into the quilt. Torry, come home and tell me about the world! S1
84.35–37 in the piled . . . door.] *DC*; right outside the house, barking, barking to the door! Torry! S1
84.38–40 Did . . . again.] *DC*; Should we wait for Mom and Dad to come home? But, if he waited, the dog might run off again. S1
85.3 He started] *DC*; Martin started S1
85.6 Miss Tarkins.] *DC*; Miss Tarkins had come back. S1
85.7–8 and flung himself,] *DC*; to fling himself, S1
85.8 on] *DC*; onto S1
85.9 done] *DC*; *done* S1
85.15 six feet under.] *DC*; *om.* S1
85.15 Stinking, rancid earth.] *DC*; Stinking, Stinking, rancid earth. DC^{1948}
85.16 off] *DC*; from S1
85.22 everybody.] *DC*; everyone. S1

10. And Watch the Fountains (c. July 1943)

This very short murder mystery represents Bradbury's second and final selection for *Astounding Science Fiction*'s "Probability Zero" column. The title does not appear in his composition log, but it is listed in his sales record as sold to *Astounding Science Fiction* in July 1943 for $20.00. Bradbury submitted his "Probability Zero" entries directly to *Astounding*'s editor John W. Campbell, and there is no entry for it in Nolan's list of stories sold by Bradbury's agent,

Julius Schwartz. "And Watch the Fountains" was not a regular story sale, and it is not surprising that the title does not appear in Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index or his author's notecard file. This contest winner appeared in the September 1943 issue of *Astounding* (S1), along with "Doodad" (selection 3), Bradbury's only feature story appearance in the magazine.

He considered both of his "Probability Zero" stories, "And Watch the Fountains" and "Eat, Drink, and Be Wary" (volume 1, selection 8), to be novelty pieces; he never included them in his story collections, or allowed them to be anthologized. In the absence of any pre-publication forms of the text, S1 serves as copy-text for the present edition. A carbon typescript of "And Watch the Fountains" survives in the Albright Collection, but the paper, cover page, and opening page format indicate that it was prepared well after publication: the two substantive points of variation center on punctuation rather than intentional revision, and are relegated to the list of post-copy-text substantives without comment.

Astounding's "Probability Zero" department was an intermittent feature in many of the magazine's wartime issues, offering short "liar's tales" based on logical contradictions of the laws of physics. Bradbury's was the last of six short liar's tales in the September 1943 issue's "Probability Zero" column, which opened with a tale by George O. Smith, a veteran *Astounding* author and originator of the "Venus Equilateral" stories. The British *Astounding* reprint of the September issue (December 1943) included Bradbury's "Doodad" and other featured stories, but did not include the "Probability Zero" selections.

June and July 1943 represented the high-water mark of Bradbury's limited success with John W. Campbell. The sale of "And Watch the Fountains" came just after the sale of "Doodad" for *Astounding*, and just before the sale of "The Emissary" (selection 9) for *Astounding*'s fantasy companion magazine, *Unknown Worlds*. Campbell had much respect for Bradbury's style and creativity, but found his tales just too off-trail for his magazines. He would never buy another Bradbury story. Two additional short-short pieces intended for "Probability Zero" survive in the Albright collection ("A Rocket for the Reverend" and "That's Me, Third From the Left"), but there is no evidence that these liar's tales were ever submitted for publication.

"And Watch the Fountains" centers on two rival scientists who both claim invention of a time machine, but only one has really succeeded. The ensuing double-murder plot sets up a time paradox as each scientist tries to kill the other. In spite of the intentional superficiality of the yarn, "And Watch the Fountains," like his first professional sale, "Pendulum" (volume 1, selection 1), reveals Bradbury's early and abiding fascination with time and time travel; in "Reunion" (selection 13), written just a few weeks later in the summer of 1943, this fascination would blossom into the first of many rich fantasy variations on this concept.

Sources: Author's sales record (1941–49); Eller-Bradbury interviews; Tymn and Ashley, 64–80 (Berger).

—JE

Textual Notes

86.5 anti-gravity] Here and at 87.34 ("high-powered"), the end-line hyphenations are resolved as compound words on the basis of Bradbury's post-copy-text typescript, which he either prepared or supervised.

Emendations

86.*[title]* And Watch the Fountains] CE; *AND WATCH THE FOUNTAINS* | *By Ray Bradbury* S1; *rom.* TS

88.15 WAS!!!] CE; WAS!!! | THE END TS

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

86.9 noon. I] S1; noon, I TS

86.21 *time machine!"*] S1; *time machine."* TS

Line-End Hyphenation

*86.5 anti-/gravity] antigravity

87.34 high-/powered] high-powered

11. The Million Year Picnic (July 9, 1943)

The first of the tales eventually woven into *The Martian Chronicles* was composed as a stand-alone story during the summer of 1943 under the typescript title "Family Outing." Bradbury's composition and submission log shows a July 9th completion date and a length of 3,200 words. A subsequent typed annotation to the entry indicates a January 1945 payment from *Planet Stories*. His sales record pinpoints a January 10, 1945, payment date and a post-commission payment of $28.00. Nolan's listing of sales by Julius Schwartz gives the actual acceptance date as December 26, 1944, and a pre-commission price of $32.00; this entry also links the original submission title with the eventual published title, "The Million Year Picnic." Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index confirms the story's first appearance in the summer 1946 issue of *Planet Stories* (S1), with a title illustration by Alexander Leydenfrost.

The S1 version was subsequently reset and reprinted as "The Long Weekend" in the February 1950 issue of British *Argosy* (S2); the S1 title was restored for the inaugural spring 1953 issue of *Tops in Science Fiction* (S3), and its British

counterpart, *Tops in Science Fiction* #1 (1954, S4). Even before these serial reprints, however, Bradbury developed a new intention for the text. During the summer of 1949, he significantly revised the story to blend it into the larger cycle of exploration, settlement, abandonment, and return that he had now conceived for *The Martian Chronicles* (*MC*), adding a title prefix that would lock the story in as the final "second chance" chronicle of the entire Martian saga ("October 2026: The Million-Year Picnic"). In this new and integrated form, the story has had a complicated history of transmission through eighteen editions and more than a hundred reprintings of *The Martian Chronicles* (some British editions are retitled *The Silver Locusts*). Bradbury subsequently extracted the *MC* version for his 1966 young reader collection *S Is for Space* (*SS*), and again for his 1980 100-story retrospective collection *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* (*SRB*). The *MC* text was transmitted through *SS* into *Classic Stories 2* (*CS2*, 1990) and eventually *A Medicine for Melancholy and Other Stories* (*MM&OS*, 1998).

For the most part, multiple-author anthology appearances are based on the unrevised S1 version. These anthologies span a half-century, and include August Derleth's *Strange Ports of Call* (1948), *Invasion From Mars* (1949, introduced by Orson Welles), *Worlds of Wonder* (1951), *Beyond Tomorrow* (1965), *Science Fiction of the '40s* (1978), James Gunn's *The Road to Science Fiction 3* (1979), *Alien Worlds* (U.K., 1981), *Isaac Asimov Presents the Great Science Fiction Stories 8: 1946* (1982), *Isaac Asimov Presents the Golden Years of Science Fiction*, 4th series (1984), and *SFWA Grandmasters*, volume 2 (2000). Although a number of these volumes are significant in genre history, Bradbury played no part in preparing the texts for these anthologies.

A carbon-copy first page (designated TS) survives from Bradbury's initial 1943 submission materials; the word count and the July 9, 1943, completion date, typed directly into the top margin as ribbon copy (distinct from the original carbon copy composition), suggest that Bradbury held this page (along with opening pages from other stories of the period) as proof of the composition date for his records. Although prepared five months prior to sale, collation against S1 indicates that the TS fragment represents a late discard; the working title is the only substantive variant. TS, which represents a mature and unmediated form of Bradbury's original intention, serves as copy-text for the first 250 words; S1, the only complete form of the original version, serves as copy-text for the rest of "The Million Year Picnic." The S1 title change is almost certainly authorial; it appears to be Bradbury's intended title for serial publication, and is emended into the copy-text.

Bradbury's significant *MC* revisions represent a subsequent novelized intention for the story, and are not emended into the copy-text. All of his substantive revisions for the *MC* version are included in the historical collation of post-copy-text substantives recorded below; the relatively few substantives (generated through

editorial stylings or compositorial error) within the various *MC* editions and down through the *SS* and *MM&OS* editions are also included in this list.

"The Million Year Picnic" represents a departure from the predictable kind of science fiction stories he had written, and would continue for a time to write, under the influence of Leigh Brackett and others. It was the first tale to carry the very distinct Bradbury stamp of ordinary Earth people redefining (and reaffirming) their humanity within the silent canals and delicate ruins of a dead Martian civilization. During the next year Bradbury would focus on weird (light horror) and detective fiction, writing only three undistinguished but publishable science fiction tales in the Brackett tradition. Beginning in 1946, he would return to ideas of Martian exploration and colonization in stories that would eventually join "The Million Year Picnic" in the pages of *The Martian Chronicles*.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's sales-by-publisher indexes (c. Feb. 1943 and c. 1950); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Ashley, 193–94; Tymn and Ashley, 476–81 (Clareson); Eller and Touponce, Appendix A, p. 448 (entry 46-10).

—JE

Textual Notes

91.4–12 Once . . . fathom.] For *MC*, Bradbury removed references to any higher forms of Martian animal life, such as birds, and provided other ways (such as the fantastic concept of a Johnny Appleseed planting trees) to enrich the oxygen content of the Red Planet. Bradbury's initial descriptions of a flying bird and the terraforming "oxygen vines and plants," which represent his early intention for stand-alone serialization, are retained.

93.12–13 Timothy thought . . . men lived."] The destruction of the science colony by unmanned drone rockets, representing Earth's last self-destructive impulse, is retained. In *MC*, Bradbury had to eliminate this episode to fit the larger novelized chronology, where Earth has already colonized and then abandoned Mars as global war loomed back home.

94.10 the settling sun.] The description of "water leaping in the settling sun" is unusual, but by no means confusing; the S1 reading is retained. For *MC*, Bradbury replaced the image with "water leaping in the late sunlight" as part of his far broader major revisions for novelization, but that change represents a subsequent intention far removed form the initial serial form.

95.24–26 "Government Bonds, . . . THE WAR DIGEST . . ."] Bradbury would change these dates twice for various editions of *MC*, to accommodate the novelized chronology (1999 to 2026) and the revised chronology (2026–2030) of later *MC* editions. The S1 date (July 23, 2044) is retained as integral to the original story structure.

95.41–96.6 "Mars is ripe for colonization. . . . unless I had to.] S1's stand-alone

back-story (fifty years of terraforming Mars for eventual colonization) had to be removed when Bradbury eventually aligned this story with the larger timelines of *MC*. In *MC*, "The Million Year Picnic" becomes a second start for Earth's survivors, who have already colonized and abandoned Mars. The S1 passage is retained in the present edition, which presents Bradbury original intention for magazine publication.

Emendations

89.*[title]* THE MILLION YEAR PICNIC] S1; FAMILY OUTING TS
91.14 Mendelian] CE; Mendalian S1
92.16 lift] MC^{1950}; left S1
92.21 against the bones] MC^{1950}; against your the bones S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

◊89.*[title]* FAMILY OUTING] TS; The Million Year Picnic S1; Long Weekend S2; October 2026: THE MILLION-YEAR PICNIC $MC^{1950\text{-}90_b}$, $SL^{1951\text{-}1977}$, $SS^{1966\text{-}72}$, $SRB^{1980\text{-}83}$, *CS2*; October 2057: The Million-Year Picnic $MC^{1997\text{-}2012}$, *MM&OS*
89.1 Mom] S1; Mother S2 *Also* 89.3, 89.6, 91.17, 93.38, 97.7
89.2 trip.] S1; weekend. S2
89.2 Mom's] S1; Mother's S2 *Also* 92.29, 93.2
89.5 quick as jets] S1; very quickly $MC^{1950\text{-}2012}$, $SL^{1951\text{-}77}$, $SS^{1966\text{-}72}$, $SRB^{1980\text{-}83}$, *CS2*, *MM&OS*
89.6 traveling jumpers] S1; travelling-breeches S2; travelling jumpers *SL*
89.9 Mom] S1; Mother S2; Mon MC^{1954}
89.10 stud, the] TS; stud. The S1; button. The S2
89.10 sky, the] TS; sky. The S1
89.12 on top of] TS; atop $MC^{1950\text{-}2012}$, $SL^{1951\text{-}77}$, $SS^{1966\text{-}72}$, $SRB^{1980\text{-}83}$, *CS2*, *MM&OS*
89.13 large] S1; *om.* $MC^{1950\text{-}2012}$, $SL^{1951\text{-}77}$, $SS^{1966\text{-}72}$, $SRB^{1980\text{-}83}$, *CS2*, *MM&OS*
89.14 small tourist rocket.] S1; small family rocket all the way from Earth. He remembered the night before they left Earth, the hustling and hurrying, the rocket that Dad had found somehow, and the talk of a vacation on Mars. A long way to go for a vacation, but Timothy said nothing because of his younger brothers. They came to Mars and now, first thing, or so they said, they were going fishing. $MC^{1950\text{-}2012}$, $SL^{1951\text{-}77}$, $SS^{1966\text{-}72}$, $SRB^{1980\text{-}83}$, *CS2*, *MM&OS*
89.16 figure] S1; fathom S2
89.16 a lot of joy] S1; a sort of relief. $MC^{1950\text{-}2012}$, $SL^{1951\text{-}77}$, $SS^{1966\text{-}72}$, $SRB^{1980\text{-}83}$, *CS2*, *MM&OS*
89.18 tourist rocket,] S1; cooling rocket, $MC^{1950\text{-}2012}$, $SL^{1951\text{-}77}$, $SS^{1966\text{-}72}$, $SRB^{1980\text{-}83}$, *CS2*, *MM&OS*
89.22 "Gee,"] S1; "Oh!" S2
89.23 "Yeah,"] S1; "Gosh!" S2

89.24 kids."] S1; boys." S2

89.29–31 sand, . . . pillars,] S1; sand, a few tumbled pillars, *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

89.31 a few tumbled wharves, one lonely shrine with images stolen from it,] S1; one lonely shrine, *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

90.2 with a sun drifting on the blue one.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

90.3 then, a rocket went] S1; then a bird flew *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

90.3–4 hitting . . . vanishing.] S1; hitting, falling deep, and vanishing. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

90.5 got . . . saw it,] S1; had a scared look in his eyes when he saw it, S2; got a frightened look when he saw it. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

90.5–6 and added speed to the boat, gritting his teeth. ¶ That was the last Earth rocket for one hundred days.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

90.8–13 Looking . . . senseless.] S1; Timothy looked at the deep ocean sky, trying to see Earth and the war and the ruined cities and the men killing each other since the day he was born. But he saw nothing. The war was as removed and far off as two flies battling to the death in the arch of a great high and silent cathedral. And just as senseless. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

90.9–10 like hung . . . salt blood.] S1; *om.* S2

90.18 quite . . . inside] S1; quite make up his mind what was going on inside S2

90.19 sun-burnt,] S1; sun-burned, S2; sunburnt, *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

90.20 and the hot] S1; and hot S2

90.20–21 like agate . . . on Earth,] S1; like the agate marbles you used to play with after school in summer far away on Earth, S2

90.26 Maybe it'll] S1; Perhaps it'll S2

90.27 Maybe we] S1; Perhaps we S2

90.28 "Huh?"] S1; "What-?" S2

90.29–32 pointing. ¶ | ¶ THERE] S1; pointing. There S2

90.33 tender] S1; *om.* S2

90.36–37 quiet. ¶ "Just] S1; quiet. "Just S2

90.39 Mother.] S1; Mom. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

90.40 "Oh, I'm sorry,"] S1; "Sorry," *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.1–2 Another . . . sat] S1; They sat *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.2–3 rush . . . glassy.] S1; rush cool, swift, and glassy. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.3 motor-hum, the rush of the water,] S1; motor hum, the glide of water, *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.3–4 and the sun . . . much.] S1; the sun expanding the air. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

*91.4–12 Once . . . fathom.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.8 wither] S1; withered S2

91.12 Mom] S1; Mother S2

91.13–15 Michael, . . . Martians?"] S1; Michael. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

◊91.14 Mendalian] S1; Earthian S2

91.16 "Maybe this . . . tonight."] S1; "This afternoon. Or tonight." S2; "Quite soon, perhaps," said Father. "Maybe tonight." *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.17 "How do . . . race."] S1; "Oh, but the Martians are a dead race now," said Mom. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.18–19 "Oh, no, . . . presently.] S1; "No, they're not. I'll show you some Martians, all right," Dad said presently. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.20–23 There was no . . . humor them.] S1; Everything was odd now. Vacations and fishing and looks between people. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.21–22 far happier circumstance] S1; far more satisfactory S2

91.25 seven foot] S1; seven-foot S2, *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.31 color] S1; colour S2, *SL*, *SL*[1977], *SRB*, *SRB*[1983], *MC*[1990b], *MC*[2008], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.34 fast,] S1; *om.* S2

91.35 being nothing but color] S1; being colour S2, *SL*, *SL*[1977], *SRB*, *SRB*[1983], *MC*[1990b], *MC*[2008], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.36 ¶ She sat] S1; She sat *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.36 side-lip,] S1; side, S2; side lip *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.37 sunburnt] S1; sun-burned S2 sun-burnt *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

91.40 backward toward] S1; backwards towards S2; backward towards *SL*

92.12 were going . . . fish.] S1; had come millions of miles for this outing—to fish. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.12 there was a gun] S1; had been a gun *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.13 vacation.] S1; holiday weekend. S2

92.14 Vacation.] S1; Fishing trip? S2

92.14–15 But just behind the veil] S1; Just behind the veil *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.15 vacation] S1; holiday S2

◊92.16 not left] S1; not lift S2, *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.17 ten years old and] S1; ten and *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.18 Nuts."] S1; Pouf!" S2

92.18 miffed.] S1; annoyed. S2

92.18 Nuts." . . . v-shaped] S1; Nuts." Robert put his v-shaped *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.20 atomic-radio] S1; atomic radio *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.20 along,] S1; with him, S2

◊92.21 your the bones] S1; the bones *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.24 Mom] S1; Mother S2

92.25 question, but withdrew tactfully, to watch.] S1; question, but never finished what he wished to say. ¶ For at that moment there were two titanic, marrow-jolting explosions that grew upon themselves, followed by a half dozen minor concussions. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.26 Glancing hastily upward,] S1; Glancing hastily upwards, S2; Jerking his head up, Dad *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.27 jounced] S1; bounced S2

92.27 funk,] S1; annoyance, S2

92.30–32 Dad must have . . . flesh.] S1; Dad swerved the boat, cut speed, and ducked the craft into a little branch canal and under an ancient, crumbling stone wharf that smelled of crab flesh. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.33–34 Air-brakes stopped . . . hiding.] S1; The boat stopped, and Dad twisted to see if the ripples on the canal were enough to reveal their route into hiding. S2; The boat rammed the wharf hard enough to throw them all forward, but no one was hurt, and Dad was already twisted to see if the ripples on the canal were enough to map their route into hiding. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

92.38–41 High in the sky . . . its jets.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.3–4 The sky spider . . . his arm.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.5–6 A moment later . . . dozen others.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.7 "The ship," . . . the rocket."] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.9–11 "Oh, they just . . . four others."] S1; "Oh, we just blew up our rocket, is all," said Timothy, trying to sound matter-of-fact. "I've heard rockets blown up before. Ours just blew." *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.10 Ours just blew.] S1; Ours has just blown up. S2

93.11–12 others." ¶ Timothy] S1; others." Timothy S2

*93.12–13 Timothy thought . . . men lived."] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.14 "Why did . . . Dad?"] S1; "Why did we blow up our rocket?" asked Michael. "Huh, Dad?" *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.14 "Huh,] S1; "Eh, S2

93.14–15 *not present*] S1; "It's part of the game, silly!" said Timothy. ¶ "A game!" Michael and Robert loved the word. ¶ "Dad fixed it so it would blow up and non one'd know where we landed or went! In case they ever came looking, see?" ¶ "Oh boy, a secret!" ¶ "Scared by my own rocket," admitted Dad to Mom. "I am nervous. It's silly to think there'll ever *be* any more rockets. Except *one*, perhaps, if Edwards and his wife get through with *their* ship." *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.15 Dad still listened, the audio to his ear,] S1; He put his tiny radio to his ear again. *MC*

93.15 blinking wet eyes.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.15 audio] S1; radio S2

93.16 like you] S1; as you S2

93.17 "It's all over," he said.] S1; "It's over at last," he said. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.17 gone. The air is] S1; gone. They dwindled down to a couple in the last few years. Now the air's *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.20 "Maybe—] S1; "Perhaps— S2

93.21 kids were] S1; children were *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.21 center] S1; centre S2, *SL*, *SL*[1977], *SRB*, *SRB*[1983], *MC*[1990b], *MC*[2008], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.25 down the] S1; down in the S2

93.27 kids.] S1; boys. S2; sons. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.28 brief, distant.] S1; brisk, distant, *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.30 pick] S1; choose S2

93.32 "Pick] S1; "Choose S2

93.33 pick?"] S1; choose?" S2

93.34 "Pick the] S1; "The S2

93.35 like the most.] S1; like best. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.37 "You'll . . . Dad.] S1; "You'll have that," said Dad. "I promise." *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.37 the kids,] S1; the boys, S2; the children, *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

93.40 with the kids,] S1; with the boys, S2; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.4 nobody liked. Timothy] S1; nobody liked. It was an Earth Man's settlement, built of wood and already rotting into sawdust. Timothy *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.5 third because it was fairly large.] S1; third city because it was large. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.6–7 the *Gees*, *Goshes*, and *Look-At-Thats*.] S1; the cries of delight. S2

*94.10 the settling sun.] S1; the late sunlight. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.11 city," said Timothy.] S1; city," said everybody. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.12–13 ¶ "Yes, this . . . expression.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.13 Mom] S1; Mother S2

94.14 to a landing flat, Dad] S1; to a landing-place, S2; to a wharf, Dad *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.15 ¶ "Here we are kids.] S1; "Here we are, sons. S2; "Here we are. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.17 to stare back] S1; to blink back *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.17–18 "What about . . . City?"] S1; "What about the rocket? What about ◆ home [Minnesota *MC*[1950], *MC*[1951], *SL*, *MC*[1954], *MC*[1963], *SS*, *SS*[1970], *SS*[1972], *MC*[1974], *SL*[1977], *MC*[1979], *SRB*, *SRB*[1983], *MC*[1990a], *MC*[1990b], *CS2*, *MC*[1997], *MM&OS*, *MC*[2006], *MC*[2008], *MC*[2009], *MC*[2011], *MC*[2012]]?" S2

94.20 He placed . . . skull.] S1; He touched the small radio to Michael's blond head. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.21–22 listened. ¶ "Nothing,"] S1; listened. "Nothing," S2

94.23–24 No more . . . Rocket."] S1; No more Minneapolis, no more rockets, no more Earth." *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.26 unsoiled as yet by tears.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.27 whole] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.32 "M-mine . . ."] S1; "Mine?" *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.34 bounded out of the boat.] S1; bounded from the boat. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.34 "Look, . . . *THAT!*"] S1; "Look! All for us; all of *that*!" S2

94.35 playing it good and big, and without a tear.] S1; playing it large and playing it well. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

94.39 helped Mom out.] S1; helped Mother out. S2; helped Mom. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.5 it up;] S1; it here; *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.6 for Ralph Edwards . . . there."] S1; for Bert Edwards and his wife and daughters there." *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.8 "Four," said Dad.] S1; "Four." *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.9 later," said Mother, cryptically.] S1; later. Mom nodded slowly. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.10 old Mars stone image. "Girls. *Gaah!*] S1; "Girls." Michael made a face like an ancient Martian stone image. "Girls. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.10–11 *not present*] S1; ¶ "Are they coming in a rocket too?" ¶ "Yes. If they make it. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.10–11 *not present*] S1; Family rockets are made for travel to the Moon, not to Mars. We were lucky we got through." ¶ "Where did you get the rocket?" whispered Timothy, for the other boys were running ahead. ¶ "I saved it. I saved it for twenty years, Tim. I had it hidden away, hoping I'd never have to use it. I suppose I should have given it to the government for war, but I kept thinking about Mars . . ." ¶ "And a picnic!" ¶ "Right. This is between you and me. When I saw everything was finishing on Earth, after I'd waited until the last moments, I packed us up. Bert Edwards had a ship hidden, too, but we decided it would be safer to take off separately, in case anyone tried to shoot us down." ¶ "Why'd you blow up the rocket, Dad?" ¶ "So we can't go back, ever. And so if any of those evil men ever come to Mars they won't know we're here." ¶ "Is that why you look up all the time?" ¶ "Yes, it's silly. They won't follow us, ever. They haven't anything to follow with. I'm being too

careful, is all." ¶ Michael came running back. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.11 "Is this really ours, Dad?"] S1; "Is this really *our* city, Dad?" *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.12 kids.] S1; sons. S2

95.12 darn] S1; darned S2

95.13 King of the Hill, Top of the Heap,] S1; Kings of the Castle, Grand High Chieftains, S2

95.17–18 boat, came walking back carrying a pile of papers] S1; boat, and came walking back carrying a stack of paper *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.19 in the old] S1; in an old *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.19 afire.] S1; on fire. S2

95.20 they crouched around them] S1; they crouched around the blaze *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.22–23 surrounded words like this:] S1; surrounded innumerable words: *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

*95.24–26 "Government Bonds, . . . THE WAR DIGEST . . ."] S1; "Government Bonds; Business Graph, ◆ 1999 [2030 *MC*[1997], *MC*[2006], *MC*[2008], *MC*[2009], *MC*[2011], *MC*[2012]]; Religious Prejudice: An Essay; The Science of Logistics; Problems of the Pan-American Unity; Stock Report for July 3, ◆ 1998 [2029 *MC*[1997], *MC*[2006], *MC*[2008], *MC*[2009], *MC*[2011], *MC*[2012]]; The War Digest . . ." *MC*[1950], *MC*[1951], *SL*, *MC*[1954], *MC*[1963], *SS*, *SS*[1970], *SS*[1972], *MC*[1974], *SL*[1977], *MC*[1979], *SRB*, *SRB*[1983], *MC*[1990a], *MC*[1990b], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.28 told them what] S1; told his children what *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.30 *not present*] S1; ¶ "It's time I told you a few things. I don't suppose it was fair, keeping so much from you. I don't know if you'll understand, but I have to talk, even if only part of it gets over to you." ¶ He dropped a leaf in the fire. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.32 just like] S1; just as S2

95.34 governor of a state,] S1; government official, S2; state governor, *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.34–36 Life on earth . . . anywhere good.] S1; Life on Earth never settled down to doing anything very good. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.34 earth] S1; Earth S2

95.35 good.] S1; worth while. S2

95.35–36 Science . . . quickly,] S1; Science ran too far ahead of us too quickly. *MC*[1950–2012], *SL*[1951–77], *SS*[1966–72], *SRB*[1980–83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.37 scientific wilderness,] S1; mechanical wilderness, *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.37 making over] S1; playing with S2

95.38 helicopters and rockets;] S1; helicopters, rockets; *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.38 putting emphasis on wrong things;] S1; emphasizing the wrong items, *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.38–39 on machines instead of the thought of how to run the machines.] S1; emphasizing machines instead of how to run the machines. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

95.39 Wars got worse and killed them.] S1; Wars got bigger and bigger and finally killed Earth. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

*95.41–96.6 "Mars is ripe for colonization. . . . unless I had to.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.1 prepare it . . . rockets. I] S1; prepare rockets. I S2

96.1 state-governor.] S1; a government official. S2

96.2 pull.] S1; influence. S2

96.2 so your] S1; so that your S2

96.2 kids] S1; children S2

96.5 trip. Well] S1; trip. ¶ "Well, S2

96.5 this bad.] S1; as bad as this. S2

96.5 kids] S1; boys S2

96.6 *not present*] S1; ¶ "We were lucky. There weren't any more rockets left. It's time you knew this isn't a fishing trip at all. I put off telling you. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.6–7 But Earth is gone. Interplanetary travel won't be back for another two hundred years, maybe longer, maybe never.] S1; Earth is gone. Interplanetary travel won't be back for centuries, maybe never. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.7 maybe longer, maybe never.] S1; perhaps longer, perhaps never. S2

96.8 it strangled] S1; strangled *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.10 Dad paused to feed more papers into] S1; He paused to feed more papers to *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.11 "Now, we are alone.] S1; "Now we're alone. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.11–12 who are to meet us in a few days.] S1; who'll land in a few days. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.12 *If* they lived. . . . the canal.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.12–13 Enough to start over. Enough to begin.] S1; Enough to start again. S2; Enough to start over. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.13–14 turn their backs on chaos and strike out on a new line . . .”] S1; turn away from all that back on Earth and strike out on a new line—” *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.13 on chaos] S1; on the chaos S2

96.15 He was full of that fire.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.16 That was a symbol, too.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.17 burnt] S1; burned S2

96.19–20 map of the United States,] S1; political map of the Earth, S2; map of the World, *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.21–22 Timothy had to turn his head away and swallow, hard.] S1; Timothy turned away. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.23 He got up.] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.23–24 “Come along, all] S1; “Come on, all *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.30–31 *It was already set.*] S1; *om.* *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.32 A cool night wind blew around them, and as they walked, Dad] S1; A night bird called among the ruins as they walked. Dad *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.33 “We both have degrees in psychology.] S1; *om.* S2, *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.33–34 Perhaps we’ll fail. I think not. We’ve had experience.] S1; Perhaps we’ll fail. I hope not. We’ve had a good lot to see and learn from. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.35 ago, even before you] S1; ago, before you *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.36 Mars to live] S1; Mars, I think, to live *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

96.37–38 another hundred . . . civilization.] S1; another century before Mars would have been really poisoned by the Earth civilization. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

97.1 said Michael stiltedly.] S1; said Michael. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

97.3 “There they are, Mike,” said Dad,] S1; “There they are,” said Dad, *MC*[1950-54],

MC[1974-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*; "They they are," said Dad, *MC*[1963]

97.5 The Martians . . . through Timothy.] S1; The Martians were there. Timothy began to shiver. *MC*[1950-2012], *SL*[1951-77], *SS*[1966-72], *SRB*[1980-83], *CS2*, *MM&OS*

12. The Man Upstairs (July 24, 1943)

By a series of fortunate and improbable circumstances, Bradbury's never-published earliest version of "The Man Upstairs" survives today in the Albright Collection. The 1947 publication of two very different versions of the story—each one markedly distinct from the other—has masked the fact that an original unrevised typescript circulated as early as 1943. Bradbury's composition and submission log shows a completion date of July 24, 1943, and a length of 5,400 words, for "The Man Upstairs"; a subsequent holograph comment (in Bradbury's hand) states "SOLD—1947" in the left margin. His author's sales record confirms that the story did not sell until January 1947, when his growing connections in the New York publishing world earned a sale to *Harper's* magazine for $250—far more than the penny-a-word rate he had endured with *Weird Tales*. Bradbury managed the sale on his own, and there is no entry in Nolan's list of sales by Julius Schwartz; the publication date of March 1947 appears as an appendix listing of quality magazine sales in Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index.

"The Man Upstairs" was not a good fit for any of the pulps; Bradbury had used memories of his grandmother's Waukegan boarding house of the late 1920s to situate a young boy's encounter with a reclusive new boarder who turns out to be a nocturnal predator—part vampire, part machine, and a silent killer. The child's point of view and the small-town pace of the tale made it hard to classify; Schwartz knew from the start that it would be a tough sale, and said as much in a fall 1943 status sheet response to his client: "that's the curse of doing this type of yarn. No markets." At Bradbury's request Schwartz may have sent it on to Whit Burnet's *Story* magazine, an indication that Bradbury was already thinking beyond the pulps for this tale. But the story never sold, and eventually Schwartz returned the typescript (designated TS), including his agency's cover sheet, along with other unsold stories from his six-year tenure as Bradbury's pulp agent.

Three years after unsuccessfully circulating "The Man Upstairs," Bradbury included it among the stories he wanted to revise and showcase in *Dark Carnival*, his first story collection. A heavily revised and slightly restructured new version went forward to Arkham House publisher August Derleth in June of 1946, but Bradbury continued to rework the story throughout the summer and fall. This second wave of deep revisions and significant restructuring of "The

Man Upstairs" proved too expensive for Derleth's presswork budget, and he refused to make the changes. Meanwhile, Bradbury was still looking for a way to secure magazine publication ahead of the release of *Dark Carnival*, which was eventually pushed back to May 1947; his January 1947 sale to *Harper's* achieved this goal, and also allowed him to include his second wave of revision and restructuring in the magazine text.

First publication in the March 1947 issue of *Harper's* (designated S1) actually represents the *third* distinct version of the text. The *Dark Carnival* version (*DC*) was published two months later, but, because of the impasse over galley changes, *DC* actually represents the *second* version of "The Man Upstairs." The *DC* intermediate form was carried on, with minor styling variants, through the British edition of *Dark Carnival* (*DC*^{1948}). The British *DC* text was, in turn, the source for the December 1951 issue of British *Argosy* (S3), but the August 1952 issue of the Canadian magazine *New Liberty* was set from the American *DC* without the British styling impositions.

The S1 third version of "The Man Upstairs" was immediately reprinted in Donald Wollheim's 1947 hybrid magazine/anthology, *Avon Fantasy Reader 4* (S2). In fact, Bradbury *never* returned to the *DC* intermediate version; in 1955, he used the S1 third version as he lightly revised "The Man Upstairs" yet again for the popular and enduring collection *The October Country* (*OC*). The S1 text continued through all editions of *OC* in the U.S. and in Great Britain, with the exception of the abridged first paperback British edition, where the story was shifted to a partial spin-off of *OC*, the 1962 mass-market paperback *The Small Assassin* (*SA*). Bradbury also followed the S1/*OC* text in preparing his 1980 100-story retrospective *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* (*SRB*) and its British counterparts, *SRB*^{1983} and *Ray Bradbury Stories*, volume 1 (RBS1). Bradbury was not involved with anthology appearances of this story, but the third version (S1/*OC*) is the source text for most of these volumes; they include the Harper's *Magazine Reader* (1953), *Black Magic* (1967), and the *5th Fontana Book of Great Horror Stories* (1970), as well as two British anthologies, *The Vampire* (1963) and *The Beaver Book of Horror Stories* (1981).

With the exception of the 2001 Gauntlet limited edition of *DC*, which did not involve Bradbury, the extensive second stage revisions represented by the *DC* text have been out of print since the early 1950s, when Bradbury purchased all remaining copies of Derleth's 1947 edition. The word count on the original Schwartz agency cover sheet of the Albright Collection typescript (5,400 words) matches that of Bradbury's July 1943 composition log entry; the cover sheet and matching word count, along with the evidence provided by word-for-word collation of the TS against the *DC* text, verifies TS as Bradbury's unmediated original intention for "The Man Upstairs" as it circulated in 1943. TS is therefore designated copy-text for the present edition.

DC is a source of emendation for corrections made in passages that were not subsumed in the deep revisions of 1946–47. The major revisions and partial restructuring of *DC* are also authorial, but they represent a subsequent intention; these variants are not emended into the copy-text. The substantive *DC* variants are instead recorded below in the post-copy-text historical collation. Taken together, the original version (published for the first time in this volume) and the substantial record of intermediate *DC* revisions can be used to evaluate the third and completely rewritten S1 version, which has long overshadowed all that came before.

"The Man Upstairs" and "The Emissary" (selection 9) document Bradbury's increasing willingness during the summer of 1943 to blend his edgy, off-trail weird fictions with his "Green Town" memories of early life in Waukegan, Illinois. Bradbury's final version of "The Man Upstairs," which jolted more than a few of *Harper's* readers, remains one of his best-known Midwestern Green Town stories through its continuing availability in *The October Country*. The present edition's restoration of the unpublished original 1943 version allows scholars to trace both of the published stages of revision (*DC* and S1/*OC*) back to their original—and very different—source text.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's expanded sales-by-publisher index (c. 1950); story status sheet response from Schwartz, c. fall 1943.

—JE

Textual Notes

104.14–106.2 When . . . lumps.] In his revisions for first publication in *DC*, Bradbury moved this long anatomical discussion between Douglas and Grandpa to a point later in the story, *after* Douglas has made his first covert observation of the sleeping creature known as Mr. Koberman (106.3–106.40). Bradbury would soon make further transpositions during his rewrite for S1; these would carry through eventually to *OC*.

105.28 not. Have] In TS, Bradbury inadvertently set a confusing paragraph break between two consecutive statements by Douglas during the boy's parlor discussion with Grandpa about human anatomy. Bradbury corrected this error during his *DC* revisions, which are part of a later intention for the story. This correction, but not the *DC* revisions at this point, are emended into the copy-text for the critical edition; the revision can be found in the list of post-copy-text substantives below.

Emendations

98.5 its] *DC*; it's TS

98.17 Grandmama] *DC*; grandmama TS

98.18 paraphernalia] *DC*; paraphenalia TS

99.18 back with, "How] *DC*; back with. "How TS
99.33 see her,"] CE; see," TS
99.36 all ready] *DC*; allready TS
100.15 Douglas's] *DC*; Douglas' TS *Also* 104.17
100.39 Koberman] *DC*; Kroderman TS
102.29 Miss Sadlowsky] *DC*; Miss. Sadlowsky TS
102.35 it was] CE; it was it was TS
103.24 strop] *DC*; strap TS
*105.28 not. Have] CE; ~." ¶ "~ TS
105.37 Roosevelt. And] CE; ~." "~ TS
106.3 nights] *DC*; night TS
106.26 papier-mâché] CE; paper-mache TS; papier-mache *DC*
107.5 "That] *DC*; "That that TS
107.5 Miss Larsson,] *DC*; Miss. Larsson, TS
107.9 She] *DC*; she TS
108.2 outside] *DC*; outisde TS
108.10 ceilings,] *DC*; celings, TS
109.35 bad?] *DC*; bad. TS

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

◊98.5 it's] TS; its *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
98.6 squares of] TS; *om. DC*, *DC*^{1948}
98.15 was intriguing] TS; was an intrigue *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
98.17 It was] TS; *om. DC*, *DC*^{1948}
98.20 turkeys] TS; chicken *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
98.23 which Douglas could] TS; which he could *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
98.23 on his button nose] TS; *om. DC*, *DC*^{1948}
98.25 It was best to] TS; He was to *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
98.25 Grandmama] TS; Grandmama *DC*; Grandmamma *DC*^{1948}
98.29 ground] TS; pulverized *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
99.1 *not present*] TS; He pointed at the chicken. *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
99.2 "What,] TS; "Like what, *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
99.6 Grandmama, "more] TS; Grandma. "More *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
99.10 "And Lucie] TS; Douglas said, "And Lucie *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
99.14 Lucie Williams!"] TS; Lucie!" *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
99.15 she] TS; *she DC*, *DC*^{1948}
99.19 know] TS; *know DC*, *DC*^{1948}
99.23 *so* right.] TS; so *darn* right. *DC*, *DC*^{1948}
99.24–27 It was at . . . opened the door.] TS; The house bell jangled. ¶ Through the front door glass as he ran down the hall, Douglas saw a straw hat. He opened the door, irritated at the continuous again and again jangle of the bell. *DC*, *DC*^{1948}

99.28 home?" Cold] TS; home?" ¶ Cold *DC*, *DC*[1948]

99.29 down] TS; *om. DC*, *DC*[1948]

99.31 and this horrible] TS; and wore a horribly *DC*, *DC*[1948]

99.32 up a little.] TS; up. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

99.33–35 "Tell her . . . "To rent] TS; "I wish to rent *DC*, *DC*[1948]

◊99.36 allready] TS; already *DC*, *DC*[1948]

99.37 Grandmama was suddenly behind him,] TS; Grandma was behind him suddenly, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

99.38 the man.] TS; the stranger. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

99.38–39 The room's . . . this child."] TS; Go right on upstairs. Never mind this child." *DC*, *DC*[1948]

99.40–41 right," . . . followed Grandmama.] TS; right." Unsmiling, the man stepped stiffly in. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

99.41 sight and heard] TS; sight, heard *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.1 various] TS; *om. DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.1–5 room, heard . . . him upstairs.] TS; room. A suitcase bumped down on the upstairs floor, and soon Grandma hurried down to take linens from the linen-closet, pile them on Douglas and send him scurrying up to the newly rented room. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.6–10 He stopped . . . at his feet.] TS; Douglas paused at the room's threshold. It was transformed simply by the man being in the room a moment. The straw hat lay on the bed, the umbrella leaned stiff against one wall like a dead bat with dark wings tucked. Douglas blinked at the umbrella. The man stood in the ◆ center [centre *DC*[1948]] of the room, his suitcase at his feet. *DC*

100.11 "Here," . . . the linens.] TS; "Here." Douglas decorated the bed with linens. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.14–16 The man reached . . . great friends,"] TS; The man counted out ten pennies, tinkled them into Douglas's blouse pocket. "We shall be friends," *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.18–19 Douglas thought . . . copper pennies.] TS; It was funny, the man having nothing but pennies. Lots of them. No silver at all, no dimes, no quarters. Just new copper pennies. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.20 "Thanks," said Douglas.] TS; Douglas thanked him. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.20 "I can put this in] TS; "I'll drop these in *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.20 get it changed] TS; get them changed *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.22 "You are saving] TS; "Saving *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.23 "I've got] TS; "Got *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.23 cents, and . . . to camp] TS; cents. This makes sixty cents. For my camp trip *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.25 now. I'll see you later."] TS; now," said the tall, strange man. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.26 Once, in the middle of the night,] TS; Once, at midnight, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

100.26 the storm] TS; a storm *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.28 terrific] TS; *om.* *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.28 lightning that had] TS; lightning had *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.29 silent pounding] TS; silent, terrific pounding *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.30 seeing it . . . terrible] TS; seeing it strange and terrible *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.31 light. It] TS; light. ¶ It *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.32 room. . . the same,] TS; room. He stood looking at the stranger. This room was no longer the same, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.33–34 It was not something he liked.] TS; Douglas did not like it. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.38–39 The wooden . . . going up.] TS; The wooden fork came down, went up with mashed potatoes. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
◊100.39 Koberman,] CE; Kroberman, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.39–40 had carried] TS; had brought *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.40 spoon down with] TS; spoon with *DC*, *DC*[1948]
100.40–41 Grandmama called him to lunch.] TS; Grandma called lunch. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.1 he said,] TS; he had said, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.1–2 And then, added,] TS; *om.* *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.2 lunch with you today. But] TS; lunch today, but *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.4 So now Grandma] TS; Grandma *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.5 boarder, and] TS; boarder, while *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.6 plate-edge,] TS; plate, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.6 discovered that it] TS; discovered it *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.7 in the extreme.] TS; *om.* *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.10–11 Douglas, getting . . . "Watch."] TS; Douglas. "Watch." *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.11–12 He grasped . . . his fingernail.] TS; *om.* *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.13 Wherever] TS; Where ever *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.13–14 fork-tine would emerge,] TS; fork-tine emerged, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.14 You simply] TS; He simply *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.16–17 "There, and . . . pointed] TS; "There, *there, and there*!" exclaimed Douglas, happily plucking the fork again. He pointed *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.19 away from himself, his] TS; away, his *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.19 went back] TS; fell back *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.20 Grandma emerged . . . see this.] TS; grandma appeared. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.22 soup."] TS; soup," he said. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.25–26 you. A delicious . . . upstairs.] TS; you." ¶ Excusing himself, Mr. Koberman walked upstairs. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.27 Grandma looked . . . you do?"] TS; "What did you do just then?" asked Grandma at Douglas, sharply. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
101.29–30 question why," . . . vacation?"] TS; question! When do you go back to school, anyway?" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

101.31 "Ten."] TS; "Seven weeks." *DC*, *DC*[1948]

101.35–39 There was a large . . . over again.] TS; Half way to the second floor was a large, sun-filled window. It was framed by six inch panes of orange, purple, blue, red and green glass. Some panes were yellow, some a wondrous burgundy. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

101.40–102.3 fell through . . . colored panes.] TS; fell through to strike upon the landing and slide down the stair banister, Douglas stood entranced by this window, peering at the world through ♦ multi-colored [multi-coloured *DC*[1948]] panes. *DC*

102.4 There was . . . now.] TS; Now a blue world. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.4 his pug nose against] TS; his nostrils against *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.5–6 blue glass . . . blue dogs.] TS; blue pane, saw the blue-blue sky, the blue people and the blue street-cars and the trotting blue dogs. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.7 he shifted-] TS; he shifted panes— *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.8 The two . . . Fu Manchu.] TS; Two lemonish women glided by, looking like daughters of Fu Manchu. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.8–9 Douglas giggled at that.] TS; Douglas giggled. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.9–10 And the sunlight . . . over everything.] TS; This pane made even the sunlight more purely golden, like taffy spilled on everything. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.11–12 noise behind . . . watching.] TS; noise above him. He knew Mr. Koberman stood outside his door, watching. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.13 Without turning, . . . "All] TS; Not turning, Douglas observed. "All *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.15 Koberman cleared . . . said] TS; Koberman said, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.16 "Yes. . . . All] TS; "That is true. All *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.17 Douglas turned.] TS; *om.* *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.17–18 Mr. Koberman . . . room.] TS; Mr. Koberman had gone in. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.19 and turned again to the glass.] TS; and found a new pane. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.20 "Oh, now . . . pink!"] TS; "Oh! Everything's *pink*!" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.23–26 When he spooned . . . with distaste.] TS; Spooning his morning cereal, Douglas felt a simple, pure white flame of hatred stand inside him, burning with a steady, unflickering beauty. Upstairs, this morning, Mr. Koberman's door had been ajar, the room empty. He had looked in, with distaste. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.27–29 It fit him . . . other occupants.] TS; *om.* *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.28 It had] TS; Once it had *DC*, *DC*[1948]

◊102.29 Miss. Sadlowsky] TS; Miss Sadlowe *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.29 lived here,] TS; lived there; *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.30 bolls] TS; balls *DC*[1948]

102.30–34 cotton, . . . the wall . . .] TS; cotton, bright pictures on the walls. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.31 lived here, it] TS; lived there it *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.32 him. His] TS; his athletic vivacity, his *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.32 shoes under a] TS; shoes on a *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.33 wrinkled green pants] TS; wrinkled pants *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.33–34 pictures . . . wall . . .] TS; cut-outs of pretty girls on the bureau, but, now . . . *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.35 Now, . . . Koberman's.] TS; Now the room was Koberman land. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.36–37 There was not . . . station here.] TS; cell existed in the room without having an appointed and irrevocable station. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

102.38–103.2 Again, standing . . . his head.] TS; Douglas finished breakfast, feeding simultaneously on one part buttered toast, two parts hatred. ¶ He walked up to the landing and stared out the ♦ colored [coloured *DC*[1948]] glasses. ¶ Mr. Koberman strolled by below, on the sidewalk, on his morning exercise. He walked straight, cane looped on arm half way to elbow, his straw hat glued to his head with patent oil. *DC*

103.5–8 Douglas did not . . . front door.] TS; There was something about Mr. Koberman. Douglas squinted. The blue glass *did* things to Mr. Koberman. His face, his suit— ¶ There was no time to fathom it. Mr. Koberman glanced up just then, saw Douglas, and raised his cane-umbrella as if to strike, then put it down swiftly and hurried to the front door. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

103.9 said, as he . . . "what] TS; said, coming up the stairs, "what *DC*, *DC*[1948]

103.13–15 It seemed . . . black holes.] TS; Mr. Koberman stood, fighting himself. The veins stood out on his face like small, grey wires. His eyes were deep black holes. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

103.16–17 He said nothing . . . block again.] TS; Saying nothing, he went downstairs for another walk around the block. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

103.18–22 Douglas walked . . . went *swannngg*.] TS; Douglas played in his sandbox in the backyard for half an hour. At about nine thirty he heard the crash and the shattering tinkle. He jumped up. He heard Grandma's slippers scuffing in the hall, hurriedly, then scuffing back to the kitchen. The screen door *swannged* open, on its wire spring restrainer. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

103.23 "Douglas-boy!"] TS; "Douglas!" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

◊103.24 strap] TS; strop *DC*, *DC*[1948]

103.27 "But, Grammy, . . . time."] TS; "I been sitting right here," he protested. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

103.28 "Come in . . . done!"] TS; "Come in here! See what you done!" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

103.29–31 tumbled . . . panes.] TS; The great ♦ colored [coloured *DC*[1948]] window panes were tumbled in a rainbow chaos on the upstairs landing. The basketball lay on the ruins. *DC*

103.32–37 And before Douglas . . . song to it.] TS; Before Douglas could even begin telling his innocence, Grandma struck him seven stinging whops on

his rump. Screaming, Douglas leaped like a fish, and wherever he landed he was whopped again! He sang an age old song to his wild dancing. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

103.38–104.4 Nursing a great . . . Just wait.] TS; Much later, hiding his mind in a pile of sand in the sand-box, like an ostrich, Douglas nursed his pain. He knew who'd thrown that basketball to shatter the ◆ colored [coloured *DC*[1948]] windows. A man with a straw hat and a stiff umbrella, and a cold, grey room. Yeah, yeah, yeah. He dribbled tears in the sand. Just wait. Just wait. *DC*

104.7 glass dropping] TS; glass dropped *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.7–8 down, . . . about it.] TS; down. Grandma looked broken-hearted. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.9–11 After Grandma . . . would happen . . .] TS; When she was gone, Douglas dragged himself over to save out three pieces of the precious glass; pink and green and blue. He had an idea why Mr. Koberman disliked the ◆ colored [coloured *DC*[1948]] windows. These—he clinked them in his fingers—would be worth saving. *DC*

104.14–106.2 When . . . lumps.] TS; *[Passage moved to a later point in the DC version, following 106.40 ("innocent.").]*

104.15 meant that Grandpa] TS; meant Grandfather *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.15–18 arrived . . . like that.] TS; arrived from his newspaper office each night, shortly ahead of the boarders, at five-fifteen, a copy of his own newspaper folded into his black coat-pocket along with a pink peppermint stick to be used expressly for spoiling ◆ Douglas' [Douglas's *DC*[1948]] dinner-appetite. *DC*

104.20 vigorous life-battle] TS; vigorously long life-battle *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.20–22 Grandpa looked . . . there!"] TS; Grandpa, peering down over the cliff of that stomach, cried, "Hello, down there!" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.23 Then, seated] TS; Seated *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.23 Morris] TS; morris *DC*[1948]

104.23–24 Grandpa would scan . . . grey eyes.] TS; Grandpa scanned the paper with a keen eye. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.25 "Grandma was cutting] TS; "Grandma cut *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.25–26 today," . . . watching."] TS; today. It's fun watching," said Douglas. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.27–28 "You're . . . Hah-hah!"] TS; "Chickens? Again? That's twice this week. She's the chickenest woman. You like to watch her cut 'em, eh? Cold blooded little pepper, Ha!" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.29–31 Sitting on . . . sound-transmission.] TS; Douglas felt the subterranean laughter explode down through the huge old bones, echo out on Grandpa's vibrant knee-cap. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.32 "I'm not . . . curious."] TS; "I'm just curious," said Douglas. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.33–36 "Why, look . . . and all."] TS; "You *are*," rumbled Grandpa, pursing his lips, scowling. "I remember that day when the young lady was killed at

the rail station. Didn't bother you a mite. You just walked over and looked at her, blood and all." *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.38 Grandpa laid . . . sick?"] TS; "Doesn't it make you sick?" Grandpa put the paper aside. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

104.40–105.6 "You're a queer . . . trumped up a lot of] TS; "Queer duck. Sensible, though. Stay that way, Dougie-boy. Fear nothing, ever in life. Life's full of things not worth fearing. Bodies are bodies and blood is blood. The only bad things are those we make in our minds. We teach each other fear. We learn certain reactions to certain stimuli. Death, for instance. Orientals deem it fairly fine and honorable to die. But some European cultures have trumped up *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.7 He stopped . . . chuckled.] TS; He stopped, blinked, swallowed, and laughed. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.8 "*What* am I] TS; "What *am* I *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.8 understand a word."] TS; understand one word—" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.9 "Yes, I do.] TS; "Sure, I do. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.10–12 Gramps pinched . . . months ago."] TS; "Funny duck. Your father raised you funny. But then, him being a military man, and you so close to him 'till you come here last year." *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.13 funny at all. I'm] TS; funny. I'm *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.13 me."] TS; *me*." *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.14 Gramps] TS; Grandpa *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.14 "you have] TS; "you *have* *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.14 There is] TS; There's *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.18 have a heart . . . stomach?"] TS; have no heart, lungs or stomach?" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.19 was by now . . . questions.] TS; was used to such questions. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.19 "Well, then,] TS; "Why, then, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.21–22 "No, that's . . . alive?"] TS; "No, I don't mean that. I mean, what if he didn't have a heart or no lungs or no stomach, but still walked around? Alive?" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.24–25 "But, besides . . . like us."] TS; "besides," said Douglas, swiftly. "I don't mean a—a miracle. I mean—what if he was all *different* inside? Not like me." *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.26 see what you mean. Hmm. He] TS; see. Umm. Well, he *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.27 Douglas] TS; boy *DC*, *DC*[1948]

◊105.28 not. " ¶ "Have . . . brain] TS; not. " Douglas stared at the watch-fobbed stomach. "Gramps. Gramps, you got a heart and a brain *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.29 tell you I have."] TS; tell you!" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.30 know?"] TS; *know?*" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.31 "Well—I—that is—I."] TS; "Well." *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.32 don't.] TS; don't know. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.33 be as solid as a potato inside] TS; be potato-solid *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.34 "And have . . . and lungs?"] TS; "How about me? Have *I* got a stomach?" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.35–38 "Yes, . . . going, Douglas."] TS; "You certainly *have*!" said Grandma, in the ◆ parlor [parlour *DC*[1948]] entrance. "'Cause I feed it. And you've lungs, because you scream loud enough to wake the crumblees. And you've dirty hands, go wash them! Dinner's ready. Grandpa, come on. Douglas, git!" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.39 *not present*] TS; ¶ She tinkled a little black lacquered bell in the hall. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.39–40 In the ensuing . . . Gramps,] TS; In the rush of boarders streaming downstairs, Grandpa, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.41 had no opportunity to do so.] TS; lost his opportunity. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

105.41–106.1 Dinner was . . . longer] TS; If dinner delayed an instant more, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.3–4 To add . . . days.] TS; Mr. Koberman worked nights and slept all day. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

◊106.3 night] TS; nights *DC*

106.6–7 roused . . . supper.] TS; came down to the huge supper with all the other boarders. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.8 This meant that Douglas had to be quiet.] TS; Mr. Koberman's sleeping habits made it necessary for Douglas to be quiet. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.9 in upon him] TS; in on him *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.10 whenever . . . door] TS; when Grandma visited next door *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.10–11 or at . . . groceries,] TS; or bought groceries at Mrs. Singer's, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.12 beating continually upon] TS; beating upon *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.13 a quick . . . house] TS; a quick shuttling of the house *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.14 then upstairs . . . toilet] TS; flushing all the toilets *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.15 After two days of this,] TS; After three days, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.16 third] TS; fourth *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.16 had gone] TS; was gone *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.16 Douglas yelled] TS; he yelled *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.17 ten minutes without] TS; ten minutes straight, without *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.18 He tried . . . opened it.] TS; Then, and only then, did he dare to try the door, carefully, and open it. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.18–21 The shades . . . lie there.] TS; The room was in half-light, the shades drawn. Mr. Koberman lay on top of the covers of his bed, in sleeping clothes, breathing gently, up and down. He didn't move. His face was motionless. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.23 echoed Mr. Koberman's] TS; echoed the man's *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.25 Douglas walked across the room.] TS; Douglas advanced. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

◊106.26–27 no response. . . . complaining.] TS; no answer. Mr. Koberman lay like a ◆ papier-mache [papier-mâché *DC*[1948]] dummy, not complaining, his eyes shut. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.28 "Mr. Koberman! Mr. Koberman!"] TS; "Mr. Koberman!" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.29–32 Douglas glanced . . . sleeping face.] TS; Douglas searched the room with quick eyes. On the bureau rested the wooden eating utensils. This gave Douglas an idea. He ran and got a silver fork, came back. Picking the tines he held it close to the sleeping face. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.33–34 Winced . . . lips.] TS; He twisted on his bed, groaning, muttering bitterly. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.36–38 Yelling, . . . wake up.] TS; Another ting of the fork. Mr. Koberman twitched in a nightmare of vibrations, but could not wake up. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.38 *not present*] TS; Douglas remembered about the ◆ colored [coloured *DC*[1948]] glass. He drew a pink shard from his pocket and stared through it at Mr. Koberman. The clothes dissolved off of Mr. Koberman. The pink glass had something to do with it. Or maybe it was the clothes themselves, being *on* Mr. Koberman. Douglas licked his lips. He could see *inside* Mr. Koberman. ¶ Mr. Koberman was—weird inside. ¶ Very weird. Very interesting. ¶ He was beginning to enjoy himself when the front door banged. *DC*

106.39 Grandma came] TS; Grandma was *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.40 Retreating, . . . innocent.] TS; Douglas had to come downstairs, frustrated, trying to look innocent. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

106.40 innocent. ¶ When] S1 *[Passage from earlier point in TS (104.14–106.2) moved here during Bradbury's DC revisions.]*

106.41 table that evening,] TS; table, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.1–2 cleared out an obstruction in his] TS; cleared his *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.3 later," said Grandma. "When] TS; later, when *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.3 "When . . . coffee."] TS; when we drink coffee," said Grandma. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.4 "No-but it's] TS; "It's *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.6 lives] TS; lived *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.6–8 reason at all, . . . cringe.] TS; reason, just funny kinds of tattoos all over her, and a facial expression would make Dante cringe. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.9 Miss White?] TS; Whitley? *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.10–11 "Things like that . . . peek at] TS; "Those things happen alla time," said Mr. Peters, the garage mechanic, chewing. Ever peek in *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.11 Persons] TS; Peoples' *DC*; People's *DC*[1948]

107.13 cut in with,] TS; cut in. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.13 want any more] TS; want more *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.13–14 liberal spoons of it from] TS; liberal portions from *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.15 a chicken can have] TS; that chicken had had *DC*, *DC*[1948]

107.16 THREE] TS; *three DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.16 *not present*] TS; Eh? *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.16 Why not?] TS; ¶ Why not? *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.17 rolled along merrily] TS; continued merry *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.18 remember, only a week] TS; remember a week *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.20 stomach, yet.] TS; stomach? So. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.21–22 was king . . . his speech.] TS; let somebody interrupt him on occasions when he needed breath. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.23 declared] TS; said *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.23 mechanic, "we maybe] TS; mechanic. "Maybe we *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.23–24 in our town."] TS; in town." *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.25 now, Bob."] TS; now." *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.26 "Why, sure.] TS; "Sure. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.27 somewheres, once.] TS; somewhere once. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.28–29 floor, . . . sitting.] TS; floor looking up at *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.32–33 things we don't know.] TS; things. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.33 shove them in] TS; heave them into *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.34 tother. That's silly.] TS; another. That'd be silly. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.34 people, that's all. People who do things.] TS; people, people who do things. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.35 *not present*] TS; "Good evening, everyone," said Mr. Koberman, and got up and went out for his evening walk to work. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.36–37 The radio . . . bed.] TS; The radio was turned on. Card games were played. Ice cream was bought and served later. Then, the goodnights, and into bed. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.38 ticking of the clock] TS; clock ticking *DC*, *DC*[1948]
107.40–41 breakfast, and through it all Douglas] TS; breakfast. Douglas *DC*, *DC*[1948]
108.1 At hot high noon,] TS; At noon, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
108.1 went away to] TS; went to *DC*, *DC*[1948]
◊108.2 outisde Koberman's] TS; outside Mr. Koberman's *DC*, *DC*[1948]
108.2 moment and] TS; minute, and *DC*, *DC*[1948]
108.2 to get in.] TS; to enter. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
108.2–3 This time . . . pass-key.] TS; This time the door was locked. He had to run get the pass-key. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
108.4–5 Finally . . . again.] TS; Clutching the pass-key, and the pieces of ◆ colored [coloured *DC*[1948]] glass nervously, he entered and closed the door and heard Mr. Koberman breathing deep. *DC*
108.5–6 Douglas placed . . . face.] TS; Douglas placed the blue glass fragment over his own eyes. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
108.7–8 in one . . . different] TS; in a blue world different *DC*, *DC*[1948]
108.9 Here were . . . furniture,] TS; Aquamarine furniture, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

◊108.10 celings,] TS; ceilings, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.13 drew back a little,] TS; fell back, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.13 eyes.] TS; face. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.15 experimented.] TS; experimented, trembling. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.16 seemed staring . . . sealed.] TS; seemed to peer hungrily, avidly through the closed lids, like little flashlights. Without the blue glass they seemed tight shut. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.18 stood there for five minutes, amazed.] TS; stood amazed for five minutes. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.20 translucent glass.] TS; stair window. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.20 panes, Mr.] TS; ◆ colored [coloured *DC*[1948]] panes, the different worlds; Mr. *DC*

108.21 said himself.] TS; said so himself. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.22 glass] TS; windows *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.22 destroyed.] TS; broken. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.23 Mr. Koberman, wake up! Mr. Koberman, wake up!] TS; Mr. Koberman, wake up! *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.25 work at night?"] TS; work?" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.27 No response.] TS; A little breeze stirred the blue window shade. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.28 yellow world,] TS; yellow one, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.29 No response.] TS; *om.* *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.29 *not present*] TS; Over everything was a blue glass silence. ¶ "Wait there," said Douglas. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.30 Douglas went to the] TS; He walked out of the room, walked downstairs to the *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.31 gleaming in regular, shining rows.] TS; gleaming. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.32–33 sharpest . . . closed it . . .] TS; sharpest, biggest one. Very calmly he walked into the hall, climbed back up the stairs again, opened the door to Mr. Koberman's room and closed it. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.36 Douglas came . . . table.] TS; Grandma was fingering a pie-crust into a pan when Douglas entered the kitchen to put something on the table. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.37 "Grandmama,] TS; "Grandma, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.38–39 Grandma was busy . . . she said,] TS; She glanced up briefly, over her glasses. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

108.40 colored bright orange.] TS; bright orange in ◆ color [colour *DC*[1948]]. *DC*

108.41–42 not too bad.] TS; not bad. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

109.1 "Never . . . before?"] TS; "Ever see anything like it, Grandma?" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

109.5 this, Grandma?"] TS; *this?*" *DC*, *DC*[1948]

109.7 She looked.] TS; *om.* *DC*, *DC*[1948]

109.7 Go 'way."] TS; *om. DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.8 returned] TS; came *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.9 others.] TS; other shapes. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.10 off, busy tone.] TS; off tone, very busy. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.13 humans] TS; people *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.15 "Grandma, where's] TS; "Where's *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.18 tramped] TS; tromped *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.18 parlor . . . mantel.] TS; ◆ parlor [parlour *DC*[1948]], reached up for the piggy-bank. *DC*
109.19 five-ten.] TS; five-fifteen. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.20 "Grandpa, will you come upstairs with me?"] TS; "Grandpa, come upstairs." *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.22 "I want . . . something.] TS; "Something to show you. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.23 chuckled and followed] TS; chuckled, followed *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.23 grandson's pattering feet] TS; grandson's feet *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.24 door.] TS; room. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.25 this, ever. She] TS; this; she *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.25 it."] TS; it," said Douglas. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.26 Douglas pushed the door open.] TS; He pushed the door wide. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.30 that last . . . well.] TS; the last scene all the rest of his life. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.31 assistants around him.] TS; assistants. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.35 bad with it.] TS; bad. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.37 And then the coroner] TS; The coroner *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.38 "He's dead all] TS; "Koberman's dead, all *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.39 assistant said, "Did] TS; assistant sweated. "Did *DC*, *DC*[1948]
109.39 THINGS] TS; *things DC*, *DC*[1948]
110.1 the body.] TS; Mr. Koberman's body. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
110.1 kept a secret,] TS; kept secret, *DC*, *DC*[1948]
110.6 ¶ The coroner] TS; The coroner *DC*, *DC*[1948]
110.7 to a lot of trouble] TS; to much trouble *DC*, *DC*[1948]
110.7 But he had] TS; He had *DC*, *DC*[1948]
110.11 LIVED] TS; *lived DC*, *DC*[1948]
110.11 all 'that' was taken] TS; all these *things* were taken *DC*, *DC*[1948]
110.19 inside the chest.] TS; inside Mr. Koberman's chest. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

13. Reunion (August 5, 1943)

Bradbury followed up the dark fantasy of "The Man Upstairs" with "Reunion,"—a return to the kind of nostalgic, child-centered fantasy that his agent Julius Schwartz enjoyed, yet found increasingly difficult to sell. His author's composi-

tion log carries a completion and probable submission date of August 5, 1943, for a 3,000-word draft of "Re-Union"; the left margin of the entry bears a subsequent but undated note "SOLD!" Bradbury's sales record entry shows a January 1944 sale to *Weird Tales*, with a penciled note in the right margin indicating a $30.00 post-commission payment. Nolan's list of sales by Schwartz confirms the $30.00 post-commission price but shows a date of November 1, 1943, probably reflecting the date that *Weird*'s associate editor Monty Buchanan informally accepted the story. Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index provides the $33.00 pre-commission payment and publication date; the submitted draft now topped 3,200 words, thus generating payment at *Weird*'s usual penny-a-word rate.

Initial publication of "Reunion" in the March 1944 issue of *Weird Tales* (designated S1), with a title illustration by A. R. Tilburne, was followed by a reset and unillustrated appearance in the July 1944 Canadian issue (S2). This long-lived magazine ceased publication in 1955, but the serial version of "Reunion" was reprinted in the fall 1984 issue of the reborn quarterly form of *Weird Tales*. During the winter and spring of 1946 Bradbury carefully revised the story for inclusion in *Dark Carnival* (*DC*); this first Bradbury story collection was released in May 1947. "Reunion" was one of the casualties of the post-war extension of Britain's paper rationing; the 1948 British edition of *DC* dropped this story as well as six others from the original American edition. The 2001 Gauntlet edition of *Dark Carnival* (*DC*^{2001}) published "Reunion" among expanded contents that included all of Bradbury's *Weird Tales* stories; Bradbury did not actively participate in the preparation of this volume, nor did he ever include this story in any of his other story collections.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1943, Julius Schwartz was concerned that his rapidly rising client was veering too far into fantasies of the mind; Dorothy McIlwraith, editor-in-chief at *Weird Tales*, wanted Bradbury to submit more traditional and action-based ghost and ghoul stories. In December she bounced two Bradbury submissions (the never-published stories "Juju Bones" and "The Mesa") and reiterated the action-minded nature of her readership. Schwartz found a more willing accomplice in Monty Buchanan, McIlwraith's sub-editor, and quietly pulled back "The Night" in return for active consideration of "Reunion." The three status sheets exchanged between author and agent during the fall and early winter of 1943–44 (Bradbury prepared them, and Schwartz filled them in) reveal that Buchanan simply sent "Reunion" to the printer in January 1944 to typeset for the March issue before giving McIlwraith a chance to decline it. For a time she relented, allowing Bradbury's child fantasy "The Lake" (volume 1, selection 15) to appear in the next bimonthly issue.

Bradbury retained the dated first page from a mature draft to protect his authorship (TS), along with a cover sheet indicating the final word count with the submitted title "The Reunion." Bradbury subsequently blotted out the definite

article; as a title, "The Reunion" had already been shortened in his last two status sheets to Schwartz, and the surviving first page of TS also carries the shorter title, indicating Bradbury's approval of the shortened "Reunion" title through most, if not all, of the circulation period. The shorter title "Reunion" of TS, as well as the first five TS paragraphs preserved in Bradbury's unmediated hand, provide copy-text for the beginning of the story. S1, representing the earliest known form for the rest of the story, provides copy-text for the remaining portion of the tale. The revisions Bradbury made for *DC* represent a subsequent intention to refashion "Reunion" within the context of a larger body of revised early stories; these revisions are not emended into the copy-text, but the substantives are included in the post-copy-text historical collation below.

"Reunion" continued Bradbury's string of *Weird Tales* appearances; he had placed stories in five of the six issues of 1943, and would be featured in all six 1944 issues. The story was sparked by Bradbury's memories of the large copper washing machine in his grandmother's basement, and the way that the washing cycle seemed to remove the tangible memories of those who wore them. The use of sensory bridges to the past recur in many of the stories pulled into *Dandelion Wine* (1957) and in such stories as "A Scent of Sarsaparilla" and "Autumn Afternoon," a late-life publication that dates from the early years of Bradbury's career.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's sales-by-publisher indexes (c. Feb. 1943 and c. 1950); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Bradbury–Schwartz status sheets, undated, c. early fall and Nov. 1943, Jan. 1944; Eller–Bradbury interviews; Tymn and Ashley, 727–36 (Weinberg).

—JE

Textual Notes

111.21–22 pump-handle's] The TS fragment opening portion of the copy-text allows us to preserve Bradbury's preferred compound form, which was obscured by an end-line break in S1 and styled out in *DC*.

112.20 washing machine] Bradbury occasionally styles "washing machine" as a hyphenated compound. This inconsistency comes through the minimal styling of S1; Bradbury shows no discernible preference, and simply drifts into the compound form very late in the story. These variations are not distracting, and are retained.

Emendations

112.10 millennial] S2; milennial S1

112.17 her] S2; here S1

113.35 under foot."] CE; under foot.^ S1; underfoot." S2

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

111.[title] REUNION] TS; Reunion | By RAY BRADBURY S1
111.2 old cranny] TS; ancient beam *DC*
111.7 unbelievable,] TS; incredible, *DC*
111.8–9 seemed almost alive, floundering their empty] TS; seemed alive, floundering empty
111.11 until] TS; into *DC*
111.11 a long regiment] TS; regiments *DC*
111.12 upon wire] TS; on wire *DC*
111.13 or gather] TS; gather *DC*
111.16 order] TS; instruction *DC*
111.19 nicknamed Mal,] TS; seizing the first chance, *DC*
111.19 the large old house] TS; their old house
111.20 Mom and Dad] TS; mother and father *DC*
*111.21–22 pump-handle's creaking sound] TS; pump^handle's creak *DC*
111.23 Oh, Mal, oh, Mal!"] S1; Oh, Mal! Mal! *DC*
111.25 Opie kept calling,] S1; Opie called again, *DC*
111.27 softly enunciated] S1; swiftly whispered *DC*
111.29 him were] S1; him was *DC*
112.1 babies] S1; babes *DC*
112.3 effort] S1; task *DC*
112.4 pictures of the family:] S1; family pictures: *DC*
112.5 Pop,] S1; Dad, *DC*
112.7 them.] S1; it. *DC*
112.16 waters and ice waters,] S1; water and ice water S2
112.16 it was not fun.] S1; and his breath like old meat, it was not fun. *DC*
112.17 stamped] S1; pushed *DC*
112.17 irrevocable,] S1; irrevocably *DC*
◊112.17 here] S1; her S2
112.21–22 hacking choke of Uncle Walter.] S1; hacking cough of Uncle Walter busy with his throat. *DC*
112.23 great old trunk,] S1; ancient trunk, *DC*
112.24 Clothes] S1; Suits *DC*
112.27–28 retrogress backward to] S1; retrogress to *DC*
112.28–29 infinitesimal.] S1; ~ ! *DC*
112.30 Discarding that,] S1; Discarding those, *DC*
112.31 upon David's] S1; to David's *DC*
112.33 forevermore.] S1; for the next thirty thousand years. *DC*
112.34 real estate] S1; spot *DC*
112.34–35 a fistful of flowers and want to hear him laugh or talk.] S1; a fistful of daisies and wait for David to say thank you.

112.39 "Oh, Dad, Dad,] S1; "Dad, Dad, *DC*
112.39(2) Dad, Dad, what] S1; What *DC*
112.39(2) like?" S1; ~ !" S2
113.3 doodads,] S1; jewelry, *DC*
113.3 in an old attic.] S1; in a misshapen attic. *DC*
113.4 Here was a] S1; Here a *DC*
113.4–6 blouse, . . . maybe.] S1; blouse, time-yellowed, worn by Mother perhaps to a card-party, or to play Mah-Jong, or to see John Barrymore in *Hamlet*, maybe. *DC*
113.7 "Oh, Mom Mom! . . . like? Mom!"] S1; "Mom, Mom!" he said. "Where are you? What were *you* ◆ like?" [like!" S2] *DC*
113.8 The tears would roll] S1; Tears rolled *DC*
113.8–9 And his crying was mellowed] S1; His crying was mellowed *DC*
113.9 who had seen] S1; which had seen *DC*
113.10 shelved and forgotten and] S1; shelved, forgotten, and *DC*
113.12 It was lunchtime, and the rollers] S1; ◆ Lunch time [It was lunch-time S2]. The rollers *DC*
113.17 tongue-lashing] S1; tongue-lashings *DC*
113.22 toss them into baskets,] S1; *om. DC*
113.23 deposit] S1; put *DC*
113.24–25 Aunt Opie . . . play] S1; Aunt Opie ironed all day, with his cooperation. Early evening he'd be allowed an hour's play *DC*
113.26 river."] S1; ~ !" *DC*
113.27 Mal sat there.] S1; Mal sat dangling his legs. *DC*
113.28–29 "Didn't you . . . sink.] S1; *om. DC*
113.30 "What, Aunt Opie?"] S1; *om. DC*
113.31–32 "Go . . . money.] S1; "Go and play!" snapped Aunt Opie, putting the iron away at last. "Don't sit there, fiddling. You make me nervous. *DC*
113.32 flesh."] S1; flesh, honestly!" *DC*
◊113.34–37 "Yes, you are." . . . thought.] S1; "You are! Underfoot, underfoot! ¶ "Guess I'm not much use," he said, staring straight ahead, not moving. *DC*
113.38 go out of the house and play."] S1; go and play!" *DC*
114.5–6 "And don't . . . time."] S1; "And don't scuff your shoes. You'll wear down the heals!"
114.8 The next he knew] S1; The next instant *DC*
114.8 did not] S1; didn't *DC*
114.8 instant] S1; moment *DC*
114.9–10 through the house on his way] S1; *om. DC*
114.11 possessions.] S1; accumulations. *DC*
114.12–13 His marbles . . . sacks.] S1; Marbles, hankies, shirts, shoes, pencils,

books, wires, slings, feathers, codes, stones, ribbons: all of it he pushed into huge brown paper sacks.

114.16 just going down when] S1; setting as *DC*

114.16–17 few moments Aunt Opie would blow her whistle—the silver one] S1; few minutes Aunt Opie'd blow her silver whistle—the shiny one *DC*

114.22–23 to let himself into the hot, thick, ancient,] S1; to enter the thick hot and ancient, *DC*

114.25 voice was so far] S1; voice, so far *DC*

114.26 away and dead.] S1; away, buried under stout timbers. *DC*

114.27 Mal opened . . . down] S1; Mal buried his clothes deep in the nearest trunk, deep down *DC*

114.28–30 Stacked . . . into] S1; His shirts by his father's and his brother's shirts, his small cap by David's cap, his shoes side by side with mother's silver dance slippers. His trinkets splashed down into *DC*

114.31 Time's] S1; time's *DC*

114.33–34 He carried . . . it was] S1; He carried dad and Mom's pictures to a tiny hole in the dirty attic window where a light beam entered, so small it was *DC*

114.35 last smile] S1; final smile *DC*

114.37–39 Quite . . . away.] S1; The light beam vanished. ¶ The smile and the twinkle hung in mid-air, in the dark, after-images in Mal's eyes. *DC*

115.2–4 "I only . . . again!"] S1; "I wanna be here—with you," he said. ¶ There was so much of them here. All their things. If he could put them together—may be he could make them whole again. Maybe they'd *live!* DC

115.5 true.] S1; ~! *DC*

115.5 Mal could imagine] S1; *om. DC*

115.6–7 little cell] S1; cell *DC*

115.7 little fragment of fingernail.] S1; fragment of fingernail was preserved! *DC*

115.7–12 The under-arms . . . David, too.] S1; The coats contained the good animal sweat of Dad, expelled and absorbed, kept in summer and winter. All intact! The clothing *was* Dad! People are like reptiles, shedding skin. In small shards and bits. They'd be here, those unseeable bits! All in the trunks. Here and now! Dad! Here and now! Mom! David, too! *DC*

115.13–16 Mal trembled . . . toys.] S1; Mal put his hands on the trunk rims, excitedly. He'd stay here, forever, never go down stairs. He'd stay here, be one of them, waste away into vanishing, until he was no more than a picture stacked against the wall, a bundle of folded clothes, a scatter of odd toys. *DC*

115.17 the beginning of an adventure.] S1; the start of adventure.

115.17–18 there had been no living yet,] S1; he hadn't really lived yet, *DC*

115.18 advanced] S1; passed *DC*

115.19 David.] S1; ~! *DC*

115.20 a candle-flame in a breeze.] S1; a single candle-flame in a draft. *DC*

115.20 blown out] S1; extinguished *DC*

115.22 all of Mom's] S1; all Mom's *DC*

115.24 amid] S1; amidst *DC*

115.24–25 Her jewelry, . . . cosmetic.] S1; Her jewels, her bracelets, her imitation pearls, and a few dried compacts of musty cosmetics. *DC*

115.26–33 Symbols. . . . ALL THREE!] S1; With her symbols, like a milk-pale young sorcerer, laying them in designs on the attic timbers, chanting on them in a childish piping, perhaps he could summon back one or all of those loved ones from their three coffin-like trunks! Each containing the accumulated symbols of three people whom he had never seen. ¶ He threw wide all three trunks at once. *DC*

115.37–38 ten years later. Maybe fifteen years.] S1; ten years, or fifteen. *DC*

115.39 "Mal!" Aunt] S1; " ~ !" ¶ ~ *DC*

115.39 on the green lawn, shouted] S1; shouted on the green lawn *DC*

115.39 silver] S1; silvery *DC*

115.40 pick up] S1; pluck up *DC*

115.41–42 here and laughed a little while things evolved toward that] S1; here, laughing while things evolved toward the *DC*

116.1 fear,] S1; fears *DC*

116.2 all right.] S1; fine. *DC*

116.5 build gray tapestry] S1; make tapestry *DC*

116.5 in already, sinking into the dark,] S1; in, sinking through the dark, *DC*

116.6 becoming like] S1; like *DC*

116.6–7 Just a picture, just darkness, just clothes, just baubles, just memories.] S1; Just a picture, just clothes, baubles and toy memory. *DC*

116.9 must by now be filthy black,] S1; must be filthy black by now, *DC*

116.10 his body in even more of a] S1; his body in a *DC*

116.13–15 He began . . . imbedded] S1; He got more sensitive to the place. He heard things, moving. He smelled odors of—perfume? He—*saw* things. Now, at *last!* The fulfillment! Dad and Mom and David and he! One large, rollicking family! ¶ From the odors, the flakes of skin, the perspirations and colognes imbedded *DC*

116.16 pictures,] S1; photographs, *DC*

116.17–18 To meet . . . sing!] S1; To meet him, join hands, kiss him, welcome, hold him, laugh with him, dance and whirl in circles! *DC*

116.20 It's like magic! Oh, are you] S1; It's magic! Are you *DC*

116.28 upward into] S1; up into *DC*

116.28–29 thrown open and coming up the daylight knife was] S1; thrown back. Coming up the daylight was *DC*

116.30 "Mal? Mal,] S1; "Mal! Mal, *DC*

116.32 Dad, don't] S1; Dad, wait! Don't *DC*
116.35 You worried us] S1; Worrying us *DC*
116.37–38 Daylight hurt his eyes and he stumbled.] S1; Daylight stung his eyes. He stumbled. *DC*
116.39 "Walter, come] S1; "Come see *DC*
116.40 insane. The very last of it all.] S1; insane, the last of it all. *DC*
117.3 an incinerator.] S1; the incinerator. *DC*
117.6 Mom and Dad] S1; Mom, Dad, *DC*
117.11 the precious long ago,] S1; the perspiration of long ago, *DC*
117.11 perfumes] S1; perfume *DC*
117.12–13 water. ¶ All] S1; ~ . ~ *DC*
117.13 castrated,] S1; *om. DC*
117.18 twisting] S1; writhing *DC*
117.18 hard hands.] S1; hard fingers *DC*
117.23 *down. . .*] S1; ~. . . ! *DC*

Line-End Hyphenation

112.2 High-/chairs] Highchairs
115.7 finger-/nail] fingernail
116.24 day-/light] daylight

14. Autopsy ("Killer, Come Back to Me!") (September 22, 1943)

Bradbury wasted no time in following Julius Schwartz's early September 1943 advice to try his hand at crime fiction. His composition and submission log shows a September 22, 1943, entry for "Autopsy," a long 6,300-word story with the genre annotation "det" appended parenthetically after the title; a subsequent typed note in the left margin simply but enthusiastically states "SOLD!" Bradbury's sales record places "Autopsy" as sold to *Detective Tales* in March 1944, within a group of February and March sales that included the first four tales that he sold to the detective pulps. Nolan's listing of sales by Julius Schwartz identifies a March 10, 1944, sale to *Detective Tales* and a pre-commission payment of $79.00 under the submitted title. Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index does not include any of the crime stories he placed with Popular Publication's stable of detective magazines, but his author's notecard story file confirms first publication in the July 1944 issue of *Detective Tales* (designated S1) under the title "Killer, Come Back to Me!"; this editorial imposition shifted the neutral word-association of the "Autopsy" title (typical of Bradbury's early stories) to Julie, the complex gun moll who drives the story's action.

Because of its length, S1 was featured as a novelette in three chapters, published continuously in the July issue with an uncredited two-page title illustration. The January 1945 Canadian issue of *Detective Tales* carried a reset and unillustrated reprint under the same title (S2), but a heavily abridged and editorially styled version of "Killer, Come Back to Me!" appeared in the April 1952 issue as "Murder Is My Business" (S3), an editorial move that shifted the title allusion back to the hard-edged male protagonist Johnny Broghman. But it soon became apparent that Popular Publications controlled more than title decisions: Schwartz had not limited sales to first serial rights on any of the Bradbury detective stories that appeared in Popular's various crime magazines; almost all of these were gathered into Dell's 1984 Bradbury collection, *A Memory of Murder* (*MeM*), against Bradbury's wishes. Nevertheless, he was able to keep "Killer, Come Back to Me!" out of *MeM*—the 1952 reprint and title change, although editorially abridged, allowed Bradbury's next agent, Don Congdon, to secure copyright control of the story. It never appeared in a Bradbury collection, or in any multiple-author anthology.

In his letter of September 2, 1943, Julius Schwartz informed Bradbury that a good friend (probably veteran editor Mike Tilden) had moved into Popular Publication's five-magazine crime group as editor of *Detective Tales*. Schwartz urged Bradbury to submit more actively in this genre. Bradbury had already experimented with this form, but the resulting stories—The "Tar-Pit Murders" (1942) and "Remember Helen Charles" (March 1943)—never reached print. He had just written "Whose Little Corpse Are You?"—another tale destined to remain unpublished—but turned his energies to "Autopsy," a story of crime and passion revealed as the autopsy physician lays out the organs of the dead criminal; the autopsy ritual mystically reveals the dead man's past, just as the patterns in tea leaves might reveal future events to the living. Bradbury completed three more crime stories before the end of the year: "The Long Night" (selection 15), "The Trunk Lady" (selection 18), and "Death in Venice," of which only a fragment page remains.

"Autopsy" represented his second sale to the detective pulps, reaching print simultaneously with his initial crime sale ("The Long Night," in *New Detective*). With this earlier sale to Popular Publications in hand, Schwartz had tried to broaden Bradbury's reach by initially offering "Autopsy" to the rival Street & Smith magazine group for a possible sale to *Detective Story*. It was declined sometime in the late fall of 1943, and Schwartz sent it on to his friend Mike Tilden, who now edited *Detective Tales* for Popular. Prior to publication, however, Popular's editors retitled "Autopsy" as "Killer, Come Back to Me!"—a title more in line with the emotional core of the story as well as the hard-hitting reputation of the magazine itself. Under this title the story became Bradbury's first radio sale; it was adopted by free-lance radio writer Joseph Ruscoll for

Mollé Mystery Radio Theatre and broadcast by NBC on May 17, 1946, featuring Richard Widmark in the lead role.

In the absence of any pre-publication material, S1 stands as copy-text for the present edition. The reset Canadian printing of the story (S2) represents what turns out to be a crucial source of emendation, for it restores short phrases and very brief passages omitted in S1. An advertisement for athlete's foot powder inserted in S1 may have led to the cuts, which apparently kept the story from overrunning the allotted number of pages. Both S1 and S2 end on full pages of text, but the lack of an opening illustration (or advertisements) in S2 provided more leeway in typesetting; an unsigned sketch of Johnny Broghman's profile (set into the running text of chapter two) took up any remaining space after the full Canadian text was set. The restored text here in S2, along with restorations of some of his science fiction tales detected in other Canadian magazines, indicates that S2, like S1, was set from Bradbury's unlocated typescript. Collation of S1 against S2 revealed the points of restored text in S2, most of which occur in the middle and end of the concluding chapter three. The very limited extent of the S2 variants, as well as the inferred cause of them, does not diminish S1's authority as copy-text; however, textual analysis in the context of the overall narrative indicates that these fourteen brief S2 passages are authorial, and they are restored to the copy-text by emendation.

There is no indication that Bradbury ever considered S1's editorially imposed title superior to his submitted one. "Autopsy," therefore, is emended into the title line to restore Bradbury's original intention; "Killer, Come Back to Me!" is retained as a parenthetical subtitle to avoid bibliographical confusion and to maintain the magazine and radio history of this story. Analysis of the deep abridgements and styling found in S3 (the April 1952 issue of *Detective Tales*) reveals that these substantive variants, as well as the title ("Murder is My Business"), are editorial rather than authorial; they do not represent a record of authorial revision, and are presented in the historical list of post-copy-text substantives solely to provide insight into the ways that Bradbury's editors occasionally interfered with his published texts.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's notecard story file (c. 1943–1975); story status sheet responses from Schwartz, c. fall 1943 and early Nov. 1943; Eller–Bradbury interview, Oct. 2002.

—JE

Textual Notes

118.*[title]* The opening editorial teaser in S1 consists of a close paraphrase from 121.41–122.4, followed by a purely editorial hook: "Here is a story woven from the very bone and sinew of life; so poignant it will pierce your heart

like a scalpel, so dramatically real that you won't forget it!" S2's teaser omits the editorial hook; S3's teaser omits the paraphrase from Bradbury's story, and supplies a different editorial hook: "Johnny Broghman had to walk and talk like the dead man, and love the dead man's girl. Would he have to die like the dead man, too?"

123.25 hundred grand] The S1 reading ("hundred thousand grand") appears to be an incomplete revision carried over from Bradbury's unlocated submitted copy; the present edition's decision to retain "grand" instead of "thousand" in the emended passage is consistent with Julie's speech pattern throughout the story.

124.6 happens to us!"] In S1, this paragraph and the next are separated by six stars; only this section break and the section break at 128.18 carry such ornaments, suggesting either an internal section break or a compositor's insertion to adjust spacing. These stars are silently regularized to the three-dot configuration used in the present edition to indicate section breaks in the copy-text.

125.30–31 on her.] The S1 text ("It looked strange to her.") creates a nonsense reading at this point. The context clearly indicates that Johnny Broughman is reacting to Julie's expression, requiring an emendation that slipped by earlier editors. The present emendation represents the least invasive option.

128.29–30 intelligent looking] The copy-text reading ("looked") may be a compositorial error for "look"; as a noun, "look" fits the compressed description of the character, but the more probable intended reading, supplied by Bradbury's editors in S3, is "looking."

128.40 that!"] Although the sentence is framed as an interrogative, the context of this rejoinder is more of an aggressive assertion than a question; the closing exclamatory punctuation therefore stands without emendation.

131.1 away] The entire paragraph containing this passage was deleted from the heavily abridged S3; the present edition provides the source of emendation.

131.28 heart of Johnny Broghman's] This passage was shortened for the S3 abridgment; the copy-text reading is awkward, but clearly and intentionally possessive (as in "heart of mine"), and is therefore retained.

Emendations

118.[title]* Autopsy ("Killer, Come Back to Me!")] CE; "Killer, Come Back to Me!" | By Ray Bradbury S1

118.2 Ricky] S2; Rickey S1 *Also* 131.6

118.5 autopsy,] S2; autosy, S1

120.17 be dumb,"] S2; be a dumb," S1

120.19 knees, bending] S2; knees. bending S1

120.38 woolen] CE; woollen S1

121.17 the windows,] S2; he windows, S1

121.38 or] S2; for S1
122.14 ¶ He stopped shaking.] S2; *om.* S1
122.15 nostrils the] S2; nostrils was the S1
122.16 spoil its . . .apparent.] S2; spoil it. S1
122.36 being."] S3; being^" S1
123.7 rummaging] CE; rumaging S1
*123.25 hundred grand] CE; hundred thousand grand S1
123.28 badly."] S2; badly. S1
123.39 It *has* to!] S2; It *has* too! S1
*125.30–21 on her.] CE; to her. S1
*128.29–30 intelligent looking] S3; intelligent looked S1
129.13–14 for having . . .are?"] S2; for it. " S1
129.15–16 narrowed . . .slits.] S2; narrowed. S1
129.19 "I'll think about it."] S2 *om.* S1
129.21–22 brain and he could hardly see her.] S2; brain. S1
129.25 brain . . .louder.] S2; brain. S1
129.35–36 liquor. He . . . kiss.] S2; liquor. S1
129.37 ¶ Her fingers.] S2; ^Her fingers S1
129.38–40 gasped. ¶ He let her go. ¶ He fell] S2; gasped. ¶ He fell S1
129.41–130.1 late. She . . . said:] S2; late. S1
130.28–29 is." ¶ She shook] S2; is." ^She shook S1
130.40 anybody. I'm . . . world."] S2; anybody." S1
*131.1 away] CE; way S1
131.4 ¶ What . . . him.] S2 *om.* S1
131.7–8 She fell, . . . floor.] S2 She fell.
131.37 brother.] S3; brother. THE END S1
131.38–39 ¶ Hand me . . . ¶ Next!] S2; *om.* S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

◊118.[title]* Killer, Come Back to Me!] S1; Murder is my Business! S3
118.1 CHAPTER ONE] S1; *om.* S3
◊118.2 Rickey Wolfe's Woman] S1; *om.* S3
◊118. autosy,] S1; autopsy, S3
118.13 inside than] S1; inside from S3
118.16 tattoos dinting] S1; tattoos patterning S3
118.19–20 It's not sugar . . . until—well . . .] S1; *om.* S3
118.21–22 that maybe one] S1; that one S3
118.30 here. See?] S1; here. S3
119.2 spot. Inside this brain you'll] S1; spot. Right inside this brain S3
119.9 the searing hot] S1; the hot S3

119.23 Broghman's stomach muscles . . . crouching animals.] S1; Broghman's body relaxed. S3
119.32 green stratas,] S1; green layers, S3
119.33 it sank . . . gravity into] S1; it sank into S3
119.34 like three minutes] S1; like long minutes S3
119.36–37 quickness. Echoes . . . warning.] S1; quickness. S3
120.4–5 wheel, so . . .whitely] S1; wheel. S2
120.8 blouse.] S1; blouse, finger taut on the trigger. S3
120.11 She flushed] S1; She pushed S3
◊120.17 be a dumb,"] S1; be dumb," S2, S3
120.22–23 I imagine . . . *Guh.*] S1; *om.* S3
120.29–30 part, like feral . . . face.] S1; part, cold and hard. S3
120.38 to the small breasts and the open] S1; to the open S3
121.1 demanded, hotly,] S1; demanded, S3
121.7 I been] S1; I've been S3
121.11–12 shooting. Only . . . his.] S1; shooting. S3
121.14 she let him know, evenly.] S1; she said evenly. S3
◊121.17 he windows,] S1; the windows, S2
121.25 movie, today."] S1; movie, today. Like you were waiting for somebody to take you in." S3
121.31 gangman.] S1; gangmen. S3
121.36 awhile] S1; a while S3
◊121.38 training for] S1; training or S2; training, or S3
122.10 him, almost . . . inside.] S1; him. S3
122.12 kiss's for] S1; kiss is for S3
◊122.14 *om.*] S1; ¶ He stopped shaking. S2
◊122.15 nostrils was the] S1; nostrils the S2
◊122.16 spoil it.] S1; spoil its cleanliness, became suddenly apparent. S2
122.19 Their . . . sand.] S1; *om.* S3
122.22 CHAPTER TWO] S1; CHAPTER II S2; *om.* S3
122.24 L.A. Boss-Man] S1; L.A. BOSSMAN S2; *om.* S3
122.30 Sure. Sure.] S1; *om.* S3
122.31–32 paper down . . . down again.] S1; paper into pieces. S3
122.33 the Motel] S1; their Motel S2
◊122.36 being"]S1; ~!" S2; ~." S3
122.37 preservation you know. "] S1 preservation. " S2
122.41 She wrote . . . him.] S1; *om.* S3
122.42 your stiff-hand] S1; your hand S3
123.22 muscles, then . . . hip.] S1; muscles, before she shut the door. S3
123.36–124.1 He got . . . us!"] S1; *om.* S3
◊123.39 It *has* too!] S1; It *has* to! S2;
124.7–8 Ricky'd been] S1; Ricky had been S3

124.15 Julie fed, crammed] S1; Julie crammed S3
124.17–18 said: ¶ Tomorrow's] S1; said, "Tomorrow's S3
124.20–21 in the brown hip of the half-] S1; in the half- S3
124.21 moustache] S1; mustache S3
124.30 ticked, queer, inside her red-hair,] S1; what ticked under her red hair, S3
124.41 of ancient pulp magazine and old] S1; of old S3
125.3 hung dying in] S1; hung in S3
125.18–19 saying: ¶ "That's] S1; saying, "That's S3
125.25–26 too well-dressed for his own good.] S1; too well dressed. S3
125.29 The name clicked.] S1; *om.* S3
125.41 You, you Merritt,] S1; You, Merritt, S3
126.6–7 waiting, . . . fired] S1; waiting, he fired S3
126.8–9 bullets, . . . fell] S1; bullets and fell S3
126.11 burrowing like a white squirrel inside,] S1; burrowing inside S3
126.15 like they] S1; as if they S3
126.27 Boss."] S1; Boss. We'll take care of the stiff." S3
126.29 arms; and there was] S1; arms. There was S3
127.6–10 Before . . . anything. ¶ He . . . pockets.] S1; *om.* S3
127.19–21 Maybe . . . eyes.] S1; *om.* S3
127.30 CHAPTER THREE] S1; CHAPTER III S2; *om.* S3
127.32 Guns are Old-fashioned] S1; *om.* S3
128.1–5 Something . . . *in!*] S1; *om.* S3
128.19–20 nicotine fog-banks.] S1; great fog-banks. S3
128.20 rattled . . . champagne] S1; rattled against bottles, S3
◊*128.29–30 intelligent looked,] S1; intelligent looking, S3
◊129.13–14 for it."] S1; for having done the public a service. See how clever we are?" S2
◊129.15–16 narrowed.] S1; narrowed down to hard slits. S2
129.18 midnight."] S1; midnight. You be there." S3
◊129.19 *om.*] S1; ¶ "I'll think about it." S2
◊129.21–22 brain.] S1; brain and he could hardly see her S2
129.25 brain.] S1; brain, louder and louder and louder. S2
129.31–32 were: ¶ "You're] S1; were: "You're S3
◊129.35–36 liquor.] S1; liquor. He kissed her on the neck, the ears, the cheeks, and again on the lips, and she responded. It was a long kiss. S2; the liquor. S3
◊129.37 Her fingers] S1; ¶ Her fingers S2; Her finger S3
◊129.38–40 gasped. | ¶ He fell] S1; gasped. ¶He let her go. ¶ He fell S2
◊129.41–130.1 She . . . late.] S1; late. She couldn't bring them back. ¶ He just looked at her as if she were invisible and said: S2; *om.* S3
130.13–14 the magazine shop.] S1, S2; the book shop. S3
130.25 Ricky'll die] S1; Ricky will die S2, S3
130.27 so simply, so softly.] S1; word softly. S3

◊130.28–29 is." She shook] S1; is." ¶ She shook S2
◊130.40 anybody."] S1 anybody. I'm Johnny Broghman––the strongest thing in the world." S2
131.1–3 He . . . enough . . ..] S1; *om.* S2, S3
◊131.4 *om.*] S1 ¶What his hands couldn't do, his gun did for him. S2
◊131.7–8 She fell.] S1; She fell, sprawled, and lay unmoving on the floor. S2; *om.* S3
131.37 Johnny] S1. S2; You see, Johnny S3
◊131.37 THE END] S1; *om.* S2, S3
◊131.38–39 *om.*] S1 ¶Hand me the suture, nurse. ¶Next! S2; *om.* S3

Line-End Hyphenation

118.7 collar-/bones] collarbones

15. The Long Night (October 27, 1943)

This story was the second of three new tales written during the fall of 1943 as a result of Bradbury's increasing efforts to place stories with the crime pulps. His composition and submission log indicates a completion date of October 27, 1943, along with the 6,000-word length and a parenthetical abbreviation ("det") noting his target: the five detective magazines managed by Alden Norton for Popular Publications. A subsequent notation ("SOLD") appears in the left margin of the entry. His sales record shows that "The Long Night" was the first of these three new crime stories to sell; the January 1944 sales date precedes the sale of both "Autopsy" ("Killer, Come Back to Me!") (selection 14) and "The Trunk Lady" (selection 18) by two months. This entry also shows an initial sale to *Flynn's Detective Fiction* and Bradbury's marginal note indicating a $75 payment. This notation was premature, however; Nolan's listing of stories sold by Julius Schwartz shows an $87.50 pre-commission purchase for *New Detective*, another Popular Publications crime pulp, on January 28, 1944. None of Bradbury's crime story sales to Popular's stable of magazines appear in his sales-by-publisher listing, and there is no entry in his notecard story files.

"The Long Night" was first published in the July 1944 issue of *New Detective* (designated S1) with an uncredited two-page title illustration; it was reset (without illustration) for the December 1944 Canadian issue (S2). Bradbury refrained from including most of his detective genre fiction in his story collections, but Schwartz had not limited Popular's detective magazine purchases to first serial rights; subsequent holders of these rights forced Bradbury to collect many of these stories in the 1984 Dell collection *A Memory of Murder* (*MeM*). Bradbury did not revise "The Long Night" for *MeM*, but it was heavily styled (in spelling and punctuation) by his editors prior to publication. Bradbury

won back his rights through this collection, and never allowed the story to appear in other collections or any multiple-author anthologies.

"The Long Night" represented a pivotal moment in Bradbury's early career—his first sale to the crime pulps. By the end of 1943, Julius Schwartz was circulating three new Bradbury crime stories among Popular Publications' crime magazine editors. Schwartz's good friend Mike Tilden would buy most of the seventeen crime tales that Bradbury eventually sold to Popular's editors, but the first tale went to Tilden's colleague Ryerson Johnson, editor of Popular's *New Detective* magazine. Circumstances showed just how new Bradbury was to the crime field; his late November 1943 submission to Schwartz was immediately followed by a new final paragraph—he had forgotten to reveal the murderer's motivation in his first mailing. By early December, "The Long Night" was under review by Popular's general editor, Aldon Norton, who apparently asked for further revisions. Schwartz received Bradbury's second set of revisions on December 27th, and resubmitted the story to Norton. Norton purchased the completed story in late January 1944; Ryerson Johnson prefaced its publication in the July 1944 issue of *New Detective* with a glowing paragraph in his editor's column.

By this time Schwartz was actively circulating the other two new crime stories, but "The Long Night" was Bradbury's first attempt to work extensively from his own experiences in this genre. The Pachuco riots of June 1943 were still fresh in his mind; several nights of violent clashes between servicemen stationed in the Los Angeles area and young people from the Hispanic neighborhoods of downtown Los Angeles played out near the tenement where Bradbury kept a writing office during the war years. This tragedy offered a searing lesson in the psychology of crowds, and by the fall of 1943 he had written a fast-paced tale of murder and wartime espionage in the tenements around Temple and Figueroa Streets, and set these events in the midst of the riots that were still a recent memory. His more sentimental stories of wartime Los Angeles often drew on the characters of his friends in these ethnically mixed neighborhoods, but the dark terrors of "The Long Night" drew more on observed attitudes and behaviors of people more distant from the direct multi-cultural friendships of his early adult life.

A single opening page carbon (designated TS) survives in the Albright Collection, dated October 26, 1943, and indicating the submitted story length of 6,000 words. It precedes the date of his completion log entry by a single day, and may be a carbon of the submitted typescript or a late discard from it; the page was almost certainly preserved by Bradbury as dated proof of composition for his records. It contains three dozen words from various paragraphs that do not appear in S1, but it otherwise represents a mature and unmediated version of Bradbury's opening page. The unmediated TS fragment serves as copy-text for this opening portion of "The Long Night"; S1, the earliest surviving form of the

complete story, stands as copy-text for the remaining text. The opening changes in S1 are almost certainly authorial, and constitute the only surviving examples of Bradbury's December 1943 stages of post-submission revision. The resulting S1 readings are emended into the copy-text at these points; the original TS readings are preserved as superseded readings in the emendation list below.

A number of variants in S2, comprising both cuts and short passages of additional text, do not appear to be authorial. Canadian issues of the genre pulps often eliminated the title illustrations found in the American issues, and the elimination of the illustration for "The Long Night" may have created a need to stretch the text; the additional passages, along with a small commercial advertisement on the final page, apparently filled out the space in S2. In some cases, this allowed the Canadian publishers to restore text that, for space reasons, had been eliminated from the original American publications. In this case, however, the content of the additional passages centers on lurid descriptions, explicit sexual references, and intensified swearing. The Canadian pulps were not operating under American publishing codes, and during the war the Canadian government had reduced much of the editorial control formerly exercised by the American publishers. The context of the S2 variants suggests an editorial attempt to sensationalize Bradbury's story; they are not emended into the S1 copy-text, and are instead relegated to the list of historical substantive variants.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Schwartz to Bradbury, December 27, 1943; Eller–Bradbury interview, Oct. 21, 2002; Eller, *Becoming Ray Bradbury*, pp. 55, 94–96.

—JE

Textual Notes

132.*[title]* The S1 title illustration carries an editorially-imposed caption paraphrased and abridged from 137.8–12: "The street was filled with noise again. I saw the mob coming—and I knew what they were looking for." The editorial teaser on the facing page of the two-page title illustration does not appear to be authorial in any way: "It was the kind of night when doors open in the dark and secret Murder stands there . . . the kind of night when men groan in terror and children become grim-faced men." The Canadian is unillustrated, lacking the caption but retaining the editorial teaser.

132.1 Outside] Bradbury's original opening sentence was transitional, lacking a key element of the Hispanic narrative voice he was developing for the tale: "Mom was upstairs frying tortillas, cooking beans." Throughout the rest of the story, "Mom" becomes "Mama" or "*Mamacita*"; In post-submission revision, he deleted the original opening sentence entirely and moved directly into the exterior story of racial tension beyond the tenement walls.

132.6–7 pretended he was weaving fast punches at rum-soaked Sam.] At this point, Bradbury's original submission read: "pretended like he didn't want to fight anymore." In revision, Bradbury may have added this opening reference to the murderer and his feigned addiction to rum to establish the murderer's cover early in the story.

132.17 is older] The change in tense found in S1 is most likely authorial rather than editorial, and probably originates in Bradbury's pre- or post-submission revisions in an effort to extend the anecdotal present tense already developing in the narrator's opening paragraphs.

132.25 pachucos,"] The incorrect spelling "pachucho" for "pachuco" may be authorial or editorial; it is emended to the correct spelling here and at all subsequent points.

133.29 "Who is it!"] Fannie Floriana's response to the knock at her door is more of an anxious and blustering challenge than a true interrogative; consequently, Bradbury's original closing punctuation is retained.

135.5 Massinello Pietro] Bradbury's initial transposition in the copy-text ("Pietro Massinello") represents an error corrected by emendation in the present edition; This eccentric character's name is based on a real Bradbury acquaintance, and is correctly sequenced at all three subsequent points in "The Long Night" and in the title of his 1964 story, "Massinello Pietro." The transposition errors extended through the story in *MeM* are rejected, and appear only in the post-copy-text list of substantives.

135.22 *sí*] S1 carried Bradbury's intended Spanish presentation for certain words; this requires emendation of the acute accent, which distinguishes *si* ("if") from *sí* ("yes").

144.22 Was it worth the money?] The murderer's motivation, supplied in Bradbury's unlocated post-submission revisions, surfaces here and again at 145.6 ("German nickel").

145.8 *mía,*] Bradbury's intended Spanish presentation of "*madre mía*" is completed through emendation of the acute stress accent.

Emendations

*132.1 Outside] S1; Mom was upstairs frying *tortillas*, cooking beans. Outside] TS

*132.6–7 pretended . . . Sam.] S1; pretended like he didn't want to fight any more. TS

132.9 care.] S1; care and there's a kind of wind with stars.] TS

132.13 shirt on.] S1; shirt on. We wear black shirts to make our tan skins look whiter.] TS

*132.17 is older] S1; was older TS

*132.25 pachucos,"] CE; pachuchos," S1 *Similarly* 133.4, 135.38, 135.40, 136.6, 136.38, 138.9, 139.29, 139.28, 141.34, 142.1, 142.10, 143.35

*135.5 Massinello Pietro] CE; Pietro Massinello S1
135.6 Ramirez,] *MeM*; Ramiriz, S1
135.8 Pesquarra.] *MeM*; Pasquarra. S1
*135.22 *sí*] *MeM*; si S1
135.19 blood.] *MeM*; blood S1
136.4–5 rioters. People] CE; rioters. people S1; rioters, people MeM
136.34 Papa came] *MeM*; Dad came S1
136.40 through] *MeM*; throught S1
143.2 *La Compañera.*] *MeM*; *La Companero* S1
144.9 rioting.] *MeM*; rioting, S1
*145.8 mía,] *MeM*; mia, S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

*◊132.1 Mom was upstairs frying *tortillas*, cooking beans. Outside] TS; Outside S1, S2, *MeM*
*◊132.6–7 pretended like he didn't want to fight any more. TS; pretended he was weaving fast punches at rum-soaked Sam. S1
◊132.9 care and there's a kind of wind with stars.] TS; care. S1
◊132.13 shirt on. We wear black shirts to make our tan skins look whiter.] TS; shirt on. S1
*◊132.17 was older TS; is older S1
132.18 rat] S1; rat's *MeM*
◊135.6 Ramiriz,] S1; Ramirez, *MeM*
◊135.8 Pesquarra.] *MeM*; Pasquarra. S1
135.36–37 said, ¶ "There's] S1; ~ , " ~ *MeM*
◊136.34 DAD came] S1; Papa came *MeM*
◊136.40 throught] S1; through *MeM*
137.34 Massinello Pietro] S1; Pietro Massinello MeM *Also* 142.4, 143.7
138.30–31 said: ¶ "My] S1; ~ : " ~ *MeM*
◊143.2 *La Companero.*] S1; *La Compañera MeM*
144.13–14 said: ¶ "Then] S1; ~ : " ~ *MeM*

Line-End Hyphenation

133.10 duck-/feathers,] duck-feathers,

16. Lazarus Come Forth (November 9, 1943)

Bradbury's science fiction leveled off, for the most part, at an intermediate stage of quality during the middle war years, but his friend and mentor Leigh Brackett convinced him to follow her into the pages of *Planet Stories*, where she was established

as a featured author. Two of his earlier 1942–43 compositions, "Morgue Ship" and "The Monster Maker" (volume 1, selections 16 and 18), were already scheduled for the first two 1944 quarterly issues of *Planet Stories*, and "Lazarus Come Forth," written late in 1943, would also reach *Planet*'s readers before the end of 1944.

Bradbury's composition and submission log includes a November 9, 1943, completion date for a 4,500-word draft of the story, along with a subsequent typed note ("SOLD") in the left margin. His sales record shows an April 3, 1944, post-commission payment of $40.50 from *Planet*. Nolan's listing of sales by Julius Schwartz records a sale date of March 27 and a pre-commission payment of $45.00. Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index entry for "Lazarus Come Forth" lists the post-commission payment and the actual publication date. First publication was in the winter 1944 issue of *Planet Stories* (S1), released at the very end of the year with a menacing illustration by Potter. Bradbury considered most of his early *Planet Stories* tales (that is, prior to the summer 1946 publication of "The Million Year Picnic") to be apprentice pieces; he never brought "Lazarus Come Forth" into any of his story collections, and did not authorize reprints in any magazines or anthologies.

The science fiction focus of "Lazarus Come Forth" was not typical of his work during the winter of 1943–44. By late 1943, Bradbury's imagination was focused almost entirely on fantasy and detective fiction. The cluster of five science fiction stories he had completed in June and July (selections 4, 7, 8, and 11) would not reach publication for years, but he nevertheless turned out two space travel tales during a three-day autumn burst of creativity. The November 9th completion of "Lazarus Come Forth" was followed on the 11th by "No Hiding Place," a long interplanetary bounty hunter story that never reached print. "Lazarus Come Forth" was also unremarkable in many ways, but it had the kind of focused and highly emotional plot characteristics that had made his mentor Leigh Brackett a highly popular *Planet Stories* regular: a solitary and unlikely hero fighting against the odds for an almost unattainable goal.

By early March 1944, Schwartz had the story under review at Standard Magazines, publisher of the middle-tier quarterly *Planet Stories*. With the favorable recommendation of *Planet* editor Wilbur Peacock, Standard's editor-in-chief Malcolm Reiss accepted the story on March 18th. The sale was formalized by the 27th, and Schwartz received Standard's check on April 1st. Schwartz's various payment cover letters to Bradbury during this period document a sale a week throughout the late winter and spring of 1944, primarily the result of his continuing successes with the weird and detective fiction pulps.

Two false starts for an unrelated story titled "Lazarus Come Forth" survive in the Albright Collection; these both center on the trauma of childbirth (a recurrent theme in Bradbury's work during the war years). But the Albright Collection also preserves Bradbury's first page for the *Planet Stories* tale (designated

TS), dated November 8, 1943, and bearing the same word count (4,500) found in Bradbury's entry for the following day in his composition log. This page was apparently retained as proof of composition, along with the opening pages of a number of stories from this period. Collation indicates that TS was a last-minute discard from the submitted typescript, lacking only two points of revision (found in S1) that Bradbury added just prior to submission. TS represents Bradbury's unmediated hand for the opening of "Lazarus Come Forth," and serves as copy-text for the first 140 words. S1 represents the earliest known complete form, and provides copy-text for the rest of the story.

In spite of its relative obscurity in the Bradbury canon, aspects of "Lazarus Come Forth" reflect wider concerns and influences that occasionally surfaced in some of his other wartime science fiction stories. At the beginning of the war, pulp editors persuaded him to make aliens the enemy, rather than English-speaking Earthmen, in his rewrite of "The Piper" (volume 1, selection 2). Illustrators sometimes followed suit as well; Potter's title illustration for "Lazarus Come Forth" featured web-fingered vampire-like Martians surrounding a very American captive human hero, an unsubtle allusion to a world entering its final years of global combat. The content also reflected a world at war; Bradbury's concern for combatants missing in action, and for those buried in unmarked or mass graves, had led to his concept of "morgue ships" patrolling the battle orbits of deep space with minimal crews and maximized cold storage.

"Morgue Ship," an earlier sale to *Planet Stories*, soon led to the "Lazarus Come Forth" variation, where a crewman restores life to the space-frozen corpse of a weapons scientist from the distant past. The crewman saves his Lazarus-like scientist, who may carry plans for an ultimate weapon that could end a long interplanetary war, and gives himself up to the enemy so that the revived scientist can reach Earth safely. The Frankenstein-like wonder of imparting life in "Lazarus Come Forth" is reminiscent of "The Parallel" ("A Blade of Grass," volume 1, selection 13), where the regeneration of humans is forbidden by the dominant robot culture of a far future Earth. The protagonist's fascination with restoring life in "Lazarus" would surface again in "The Lonely Ones" (1948; published 1949), where an Earth crew discovers a beautiful Martian woman, dead perhaps ten thousand years, but still perfectly preserved—along with her footprints—in the Martian sands. In all these tales, Bradbury invokes fantasy (unfettered by any sense of science) to command a willing suspension of disbelief.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's extended sales-by-publisher index (c. 1950); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Schwartz to Bradbury, Mar. 11, 18, 25, and Apr. 1, 1944; Eller–Bradbury interview; Ashley, 193–94; Tymn and Ashley, 476–81 (Clareson).

—JE

Textual Notes

146.1 bad. "There's] Since TS was probably a last-minute discard from the submitted but unlocated typescript, S1's deletion of a paragraph break after the opening sentence may be a part of Bradbury's final pre-submission revisions. But the paragraph compression may also represent an editorial imposition in presswork. With no compelling authorial evidence for emendation, Bradbury's TS copy-text reading is retained.

148.2 ebon-black] Bradbury's archaic usage of "ebon" for "ebony" is retained.

148.9 numerals 51] The first two references to these numerals (here and at 148.6) appear just before the protagonist reveals the significance of the 51 Circle Scientists; the references are descriptive only, and the lowercase emendation at this point establishes consistency with the earlier reading at 148.6.

148.29 51-Scientists] Bradbury's apparent intent here was to present the legendary band of 51-Scientists as a collective entity, as distinguished from the enumerating context found at 148.23. The hyphen is therefore retained, while "Scientist" is emended to upper case to reflect his consistent use elsewhere in the story.

149.25 Will you can that!"] This slang use of a "noun-ed" verb meaning "to stop" was in common use at mid-century, and is retained without emendation.

150.3 at 23,456 miles an hour] The sequential numerical value in S1 ("23456 an hour") is most likely a place holder that Bradbury intended to modify to show a relative velocity value and units of measure. Without further evidence of Bradbury's intention, the emendation can only instantiate the existing numerals as a velocity in miles per hour.

Emendations

146.*[title]* Lazarus Come Forth] CE; Lazarus Come Forth | By RAY BRADBURY TS

146.2 a new body] S1; a body TS

146.4–5 They were ugly, obscene.] S1; *om.* TS

147.8 Morgue Ship—"] CE; morgue ship—" S1

147.24 left wet] CE; let wet S1

*148.9 numerals 51] CE; Numerals 51 S1

*150.3 at 23,456 miles an hour.] CE; at 23456 an hour S1

150.20 preparations room] CE; preparations' room S1; *Also* 152.31

155.25 avoiding] CE; avoid S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

*146.1 bad. ¶ "There's] TS; ~. "~ S1

◊146.2 a body] TS; a new body S1

◊146.4–5 intent.] TS; intent. They were ugly, obscene. S1

17. There Was an Old Woman (November 21, 1943)

Bradbury's ninth appearance in *Weird Tales* came in the July 1944 issue, extending a record of publication that would eventually see Bradbury stories in all six bimonthly issues that year. His composition and submission log provides a completion date of November 21, 1943, for a 5,000-word draft of "There Was an Old Woman," capping a three-month period (September–November) in which he submitted nine new stories to Schwartz for circulation. A subsequent typed notation ("SOLD") appears in the left margin. Bradbury's sales record includes an entry for a purchase by *Weird Tales* and a payment received date of May 7, 1944; a holograph note in Bradbury's hand indicates a post-commission payment of $45.00. Nolan's list of sales by Julius Schwartz documents an actual sale date of May 1, 1944, and a pre-commission payment of $50.00. The author's sales-by-publisher listing, prepared around 1950, confirms the July 1944 publication date but recalls a slight variation ($46.00) in the post-commission payment.

Julius Schwartz felt that "There Was an Old Woman" was an excellent genre tale, and a natural fit for John W. Campbell's *Unknown*. But it was now late 1943, and Campbell had just suspended publication of *Unknown* due to the continuing wartime paper rationing; it would take until May 1944 for Schwartz to place it with *Weird Tales*, where Bradbury's backlog of sales was finally clearing up. The elderly protagonist's unsophisticated but unflinching determination to triumph over death exhibited a distinctly Bradburyian tone and strangeness, but the story was just close enough to traditional supernatural storytelling that *Weird Tales* editor Dorothy McIlwraith briefly relented in her determination to take only conventional tales from his typewriter.

"There Was an Old Woman" first reached print in the July 1944 issue of *Weird Tales* (designated S1) with a title illustration by Boris Dolgov. It was reset and reprinted (without the title illustration) in the November 1944 Canadian issue (S2). During the winter and spring of 1946, Bradbury began extensive revisions of the S1 text for the May 1947 publication of *Dark Carnival* (*DC*), his first story collection; the *DC* text was the source for the 1948 British edition (*DC*^{1948}), which was, in turn, the source for the August 1949 British *Argosy* magazine reprint (S3). Bradbury heavily revised the *DC* text of "There Was an Old Woman" for his 1955 collection, *The October Country* (*OC*), which showcased the best of his older weirds for a new decade of readers. The substantial *OC* revisions of 1955 remained throughout the long history of *OC* editions in America and Great Britain. As with "The Man Upstairs" (selection 12) and "The Jar" (selection 25), Bradbury carried the *OC* revisions into his 1980 retrospective 100-story collection *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* (*SRB*) and its British counterparts, *SRB*^{1983} and *Ray Bradbury Stories*, volume 1 (*RBS1*). The 2001 Gauntlet limited press edition of *DC*, based on the American *DC* text, did not involve the author.

Copy-text for "There Was an Old Woman" is S1, which represents the closest known form to Bradbury's original 1943 intention for magazine publication. The extensive revisions for *DC* represent his subsequent intention to bring the story into his first book-length collection, and are not emended into the copy-text; they are included instead in the historical collation of post-copy-text substantives below, along with the few additional substantive variants found in DC^{1948}, S2, and S3. For clarity of presentation, the DC^{1948} and S3 sigla will appear in the historical collation only where there is further variation from *DC*. The additional 1955 layer of heavy revision found in *OC* moves so far away from the S1 form that it becomes a completely rewritten story. This rewritten version is readily available in print through *OC* and *SRB*, and can be compared to the S1 and *DC* texts presented in this volume.

Although "There Was an Old Woman" remains one of Bradbury's best-known early stories, it was never sold for anthology publication. It was, however, adapted to graphic form by Al Feldstein (Graham Ingels, illustrator) for EC Publications in *Tales From the Crypt 34* (February–March 1953). The EC adaptation was subsequently collected in *The Autumn People*, Ballantine's 1965 paperback collection of eight EC graphic tales adapted from Bradbury's early horror stories. Bradbury returned to the original story and adapted it himself for a *Ray Bradbury Theatre* teleplay (first broadcast on the USA Network, May 21, 1988).

But more distant echoes of "There Was an Old Woman" spread out much earlier in his imagination; the old woman's struggle with a personification of Death surfaced again in Bradbury's 1960 story "Death and the Maiden." Other tales where a mortician's work frames a story include "Autopsy" ("Killer, Come back to Me!") (selection 14) and "The Handler" (1946; published 1947). The notion of autopsy also pervades "The Man Upstairs" (selection 12); the restoration of life is also central to "Lazarus Come Forth" (selection 16) and "Chrysalis" (volume 1, selection 11).

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49; author's extended sales-by-publisher index (c. 1950); author's agency listing (c. 1950); author's notecard story file (c. 1943–1975); Schwartz to Bradbury, Dec. 27, 1943, and May 6, 1944; Tymn and Ashley, 727–36 (Weinberg).

—JE

Textual Notes

158.19–20 an sech goings-on. Who ever] Bradbury's free-wheeling dialect is not always consistent, and the S1 editors appear to have let his vocalisms and punctuation stand. The present edition also retains Bradbury's usage; consequently, words such as "an" (for 'an) and "Who ever" (for Whoever) remain unemended.

159.22 battle of the Argonne.] Bradbury's British Argosy editors substituted

the "battle of Ypres" here; American participation in the Argonne forest advances (summer and fall of 1918) was embedded in the French command; in the more westerly advances at Ypres in Flanders, American units participated with British forces.

159.24–25 Madame Schumann-Heink] British Argosy's editors substituted the classical singer Clara Butt, better known to British readers than the Austrian Schumann-Heink, who spent the better part of her career in the United States.

161.12 hustle] Bradbury may have intended to have Aunt Tildy offer to "rustle up" a pot of coffee, possibly mis-striking "r" with an "h," the key adjacent to "u" on the keyboard. But the wide-ranging and inventive dialect given to Tildy makes it impossible to separate art from error; consequently, Bradbury's spelling is retained.

161.14 deliberative] There is no indication that the S2 substitution of "deliberate" is authorial, given Bradbury's lack of access to the Canadian issue presswork stages (or even the American issue presswork).

163.19 said a third man] No "second man" speaks between the comments of the first and second basket bearers; Bradbury may have cut an exchange at this point, but there is no firm evidence to support this possibility; consequently, the original speaker identification is retained.

167.16 "Easy, easy,"] Bradbury always signaled section breaks within a story by inserting a blank line above the new section. S1 consistently styled all of Bradbury's section breaks by capitalizing the first two words. The S1 capitalization at this point ("EASY, EASY,") is not preceded by Bradbury's line break at this point on the story's final page. It is probable that the line break was eliminated so that the final two-column page could balance above the advertisement that followed. The present edition restores the line break by emendation; the capitalization is silently regularized to lower case here, as in all section breaks originally styled by S1.

Emendations

157.*[title]* THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN] *DC*; There Was An Old Woman | By RAY BRADBURY S1

157.1 lief] *DC*[1948]; leif S1

157.24 "It's] *DC*; ^It's S1

158.11 Goshen] *DC*; Gosehen S1

158.14 done, and] CE; done. and S1

158.16 tassels] CE; tassles S1

162.7 Lands of Goshen!"] CE; Lands of Ghoshen!" S1; Landsofghoshen!" S2

163.38 "The] S2; ^The S1

164.25–26 she—a—relative] *DC*; she—relative S1

164.32 made] CE; make S1

*167.16 ¶ "Easy, easy,"] CE; "EASY, EASY," S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

◊157.*[title]* There Was An Old Woman | By RAY BRADBURY] S1; THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN *DC,* S3; There Was an Old Woman *DC*[1948]
◊157.1 leif] S1; lief *DC*[1948], S3
157.1 sashay off] S1; run along *DC*
157.3 tatting and knitting] S1; tattin' and knittin' *DC*
157.7 speechify] S1; talk *DC*
157.10 door no] S1; door or *DC*
157.13 gets] S1; get *DC*
157.14 drafty] S1; draughty *DC*[1948]
157.15 warming] S1; warmin' *DC*
157.17 with] S1; on *DC*
157.18 want] S1; wants *DC*
157.18 what] S1; things *DC*
157.19 down] S1; in your shoes *DC*
157.20 shudders."] S1; collie-/wobbles." *DC*
157.21 The grandfather clock in the hall had just finished striking three.] S1; The bone-porcelain, flowered clock on the mantel finished chiming three. *DC*
157.21–23 There were four men . . . were frozen.] S1; Out in the hall, grouped around the wicker basket, four men waited, quietly, hardly moving, as if they were frozen. *DC*
◊157.24 began Aunt. It's] S1; said Aunt Tildy. "It's *DC*
157.24 over] S1; past *DC*
157.25 got with you] S1; walked in with *DC*
157.26 them—why] S1; them to carry that basket—why *DC*
157.27–28 He said, "The basket won't be light after awhile. There'll be something in it."] S1; Something in his face suggested that the basket wouldn't be so light after ◆ awhile [a while *DC*[1948], S3]. There'd be something in it. *DC*
157.29 where have] S1; where've *DC*
157.30 years] S1; year S2, *DC*
158.1 up to?] S1; up on? *DC*
158.2 trying] S1; workin' *DC*
158.2 wait] S1; set *DC*
158.3 comes] S1; trounces *DC*
158.4 admitting,] S1; admittin', *DC*
158.4 feeling] S1; feelin' *DC*
158.4–5 hinting that I'd like] S1; hintin' I want *DC*
158.5 living] S1; livin' *DC*
158.7 you.] S1; you, young man. *DC*
158.8 "Aren't you tired?" asked the dark young man.] S1; The dark young man looked at her as if she were tired. *DC*

158.9 not."] S1; *not*," snapped Aunt Tildy. *DC*
158.10 "It would be so nice for you to rest," said the dark young man.] S1; He weaved back and forth on the chair, half shutting his eyes, resting himself. Maybe she would like rest, too? Nice rest. *DC*
◊158.11 Gosehen] S1; Goshen S2, *DC*
158.11 hundred] S1; hunderd *DC*
158.12 hundreds] S1; hunderds *DC*
158.12–13 hundred . . . yarns.] S1; hunderds of pot-holders in these fingers, no matter they're skinny. *DC*
158.13 go] S1; run *DC*
158.16 like the tassles of light yellow corn,] S1; like light yellow corn ◆ tassles [tassels S3], *DC*
158.18 remember] S1; remembers *DC*
158.18 leaving] S1; leavin' *DC*
*158.19–20 wicker baskets an sech] S1; wickers and such *DC*
158.20 dying] S1; dyin' *DC*
158.21 remember—"] S1; remembers—" *DC*
158.22 memory of pain touching] S1; pain of memory touched *DC*
158.22–23 25 years ago, and] S1; twenty-five years back, *DC*
158.23 back] S1; *om. DC*
158.23 fragment of time:] S1; time fragment: *DC*
158.26 down and] S1; down and marry and *DC*
158.27–28 "I likes laughing . . . marrying kind.] S1; "I like laughin' and playin' and singin', but I'm not the marryin' kind. *DC*
158.30 who has] S1; with *DC*
158.31 philosophy is] S1; 'philosophy's' *DC*
158.32 away] S1; *om. DC*
158.33 of all.] S1; *om. DC*
158.33–36 intelligent?" ¶ | ¶ PAPA] S1; intelligent?" ¶ Papa *DC*
158.38 below the belt.] S1; under the belt! *DC*
158.39 "You're] S1; "Each of us is *DC*
158.40 (1) beginning] S1; start *DC*
158.40 somewhere.] S1; somewhere, Papa. *DC*
158.40 (2) beginning] S1; startin' *DC*
159.3–4 doing no good for] S1; helpin' *DC*
159.4 'em] S1; them *DC*
159.4 trying."] S1; tryin'." *DC*
159.5 she had] S1; she'd *DC*
159.6 away.] S1; off. *DC*
159.7 dead.] S1; cold. *DC*
159.9–10 came. ¶ Tildy] S1; came. Tildy *DC*

159.11 promised.] S1; promised help. *DC*
159.12 person] S1; body *DC*
159.14 living] S1; livin' *DC*
159.14 for] S1; *om. DC*
159.14 year] S1; years *DC*
159.14–15 It would] S1; It'd *DC*
159.15 house] S1; tower *DC*
159.17 to me."] S1; *om. DC*
159.18–22 The young man . . . battle of the Argonne.] S1; The young man listened patiently, politely. Then he lifted his hand. He seemed to know everything, with the shine in his cheeks, without her opening her mouth. He knew about her and the last war, in 1917, when she never read a newspaper. He knew about the time when she beat a man on the head with her umbrella and drove him from her shop because he insisted on telling her about ◆ the Argonne battle [Ypres S3]! *DC*
*159.23–27 "When radio came in, . . . mentioned—morbid—things." ¶ Aunt] S1; Yes, and the dark man, smiling at her from his seat on the antique chair, he knew about when radio came in, and how Aunt Tildy had stuck to her nice old phonograph records. Harry Lauder singing Roamin' In The Gloamin', ◆Madame Schumann-Heink [Clara Butt S3] and lullabies. With no interruptions of news; calamities, murders, mortalities, poisonings, accidents, terrors. Music that was the same each ◆day. As [day. ¶ As S3] the years went, Aunt Tildy had tried to teach Emily her philosophy. But Emily's mind was made up about—certain things. She was nice enough to respect Aunt Tildy's way of thinking, and she never mentioned—morbid things. ¶ All these things, the young man knew. ¶ Aunt *DC*
159.29 her shoulders.] S1; *om. DC*
159.30 If] S1; *om. DC*
159.33 "Now,] S1; *om. DC*
159.33 at me like a sick dog.] S1; like a sick dog at me. *DC*
159.35 clock in the hall struck] S1; mantel clock sounded *DC*
159.36 Aunt Tildy] S1; her *DC*
159.36 done that once before, a moment ago.] S1; sounded three once before, five minutes ago. *DC*
159.37 Ivory . . . face] S1; Bone pale porcelain, gold angels dangling naked around the numeraled face *DC*
159.38 sounding softly.] S1; made small and soft. *DC*
159.39 going] S1; goin' *DC*
159.40 "I am."] S1; He was. *DC*
160.1 cat nap.] S1; cat-nap. *DC*
160.2 creeping round] S1; creepin' around *DC*

160.3 gonna] S1; goin' to *DC*
160.3 bit.] S1; spell. *DC*
160.4 cool] S1; quiet *DC*
160.4–5 clock a ticking] S1; clock ticking *DC*
160.6 and leather] S1; and oiled leather *DC*
160.8 *getting*] S1; *gettin' DC*
160.10 So nice. . . . so nice.] S1; *So feathery. So drowsy. So deep. Under water, almost. Oh, so nice. DC*
160.11 Who's that moving . . . eyes closed?] S1; *Who's that movin' around in the dark with my eyes closed? DC*
160.12–13 Who's that kissing . . . off, off, off. . . .] S1; *Who's that kissin' my cheek? You, Emily? No. No. Guess it was my thoughts. Only—dreamin'. Land, yes, that it is. Driftin' off, off, off. . . . DC*
160.18 The clock, . . . after three.] S1; The clock chimed three again. *DC*
160.20 dark clothing] S1; the dark suit *DC*
160.22 leaving] S1; leavin' *DC*
160.22 coming] S1; comin' *DC*
160.25 coming] S1; comin' *DC*
160.27 "I have no . . . Never."] S1; He had no intention of coming again. Ever. *DC*
160.28–29 gonna sit here . . . knit for] S1; going to knit in this window *DC*
160.29–30 rip its] S1; chew the *DC*
160.31 was smiling funny.] S1; twinkled his eyes. *DC*
160.32 "Why you smirking?" demanded Aunt Tildy.] S1; *om. DC*
160.32–34 "You just get . . . basket with you."] S1; "Quit lookin' like the cat that ate the bird," cried aunt Tildy. "Get out! And tote that old fool wicker box with you!" *DC*
160.35 were already treading] S1; treaded *DC*
160.35 Aunt] S1; *om. DC*
160.36 basket.] S1; wicker. *DC*
160.36 and] S1; *om. DC*
160.36–37 were staggering under] S1; staggered with *DC*
160.38 Aunt Tildy] S1; She *DC*
160.39 something from my antique shop?] S1; some of my antiques? *DC*
160.41 "Curious?" asked the young man, softly.] S1; The dark young man whistled jauntily, turning his back to her and walking along behind the four staggering men. At the door he pointed to the wicker, offered its lid to Aunt Tildy. In pantomime he wondered if she would like to open it and gaze inside. *DC*
161.1 here!" ¶] S1; here!" cried Tildy. ¶ *DC*
161.2 "Good-by."] S1; "Good-bye." S2; The dark young man tapped a hat onto his head, saluted her crisply goodbye. *DC*

161.3 "Good-by . . . away!"] S1; "Good-bye to you, too. Go away!" S2; "Good-bye!" said Tildy. "Go away!" *DC*

161.3–6 away! ¶ | ¶ THE] S1; away! ¶ The *DC*

161.6 closed.] S1; slammed. *DC*

161.6 funny] S1; maggoty *DC*

161.7 never minds] S1; never mind S2

161.8 as] S1; *om. DC*

161.8 be.] S1; alone. *DC*

161.9 "Here now,"] S1; "Look," *DC*

161.10 girl, walking along.] S1; girl. See how she walks. *DC*

161.10 Lord, the girl] S1; Land, she *DC*

161.12 pot of coffee] S1; coffee pot *DC*

161.13 came] S1; tapped *DC*

161.13 While Aunt Tildy was bustling around, she] S1; Aunt Tildy, rustling around, *DC*

*161.14 deliberative] S1; deliberate S2, *DC*

161.14 ails] S1; *ailed DC*

161.14 girl, thought Tildy. Didn't] S1; girl? Didn't *DC*

161.15 dead lizard.] S1; flue-lizard. *DC*

161.15 door opened in front.] S1; front door swung wide. *DC*

161.16 hall. Why] S1; hall, holding to the brass door knob. Why *DC*

161.17 "Oh,] S1; *om. DC*

161.18 came walking in.] S1; shuffled into the parlor ◆[parlour DC^{1948}, S3], head down. *DC*

161.19–21 "Oh, there you . . . just missed them.] S1; "Emily! I been waiting for you! There was the darndest fool men just here with a wicker. Tryin' to sell me something I didn't want. *DC*

161.23 stopped talking. She] S1; *om. DC*

161.24 Staring hard.] S1; *om. DC*

161.25–26 Stop your staring?] S1; Stop starin'. *DC*

161.26 now,] S1; *om. DC*

161.27 backing] S1; backin' *DC*

161.28 screaming, child.] S1; screamin', child! *DC*

161.28 Stop screaming,] S1; Don't scream, *DC*

161.28 Stop screaming!] S1; Don't! *DC*, DC^{1948}

161.29 screaming, like that,] S1; screamin' that way, *DC*

161.30 wall, cringing, Emily!] S1; wall. Emily! *DC*

161.30 Emily, stop screaming, screaming, child!] S1; Stop cringin', child. *DC*

161.36 and put her hands up to her face.] S1; through her hands over her face. *DC*

161.37 "Emily, child, here now. Sip] S1; "Child, child," pleaded Tildy. "Here, sip *DC*

161.37 Here now, child.] S1; Sip it, Emily. Ah, *DC*
161.38 opened] S1; widened *DC*
161.38–39 stared, . . . pulled back.] S1; saw something, then shut them, quivering, pulling into herself. *DC*
161.39 "Oh, Aunt Tildy. Oh."] S1; "Aunt Tildy, Aunt Tildy, Aunt Tildy, Aunt—" *DC*
161.40 Aunt] S1; *om. DC*
161.41 upon Tildy] S1; up *DC*
162.1 out her young fingers and they] S1; her fingers out. They *DC*
162.1 inside of Aunt] S1; inside Aunt *DC*
162.2 thing you are messing with!"] S1; *om. DC*
162.2 Tildy, surprised. "Take] S1; Tildy. "Take *DC*
162.3 away,] S1; *om. DC*
162.4–5 Emily trembled . . . shining temblors.] S1; Emily dropped aside, jerked her head, the golden hair shaking into shiny ◆ temblors. [tendrils S3] *DC*
162.5 here, you're] S1; here, Aunt Tildy. You're *DC*
162.5–6 Oh, you're gone. Oh, you're gone.] S1; *om. DC*
162.6 just] S1; *om. DC*
162.7–8 "You're not dreaming. . . . be here."] S1; "You're not dreamin'." ¶ "You're dead!" ¶ "Hush, baby." ¶ "You *can't* be here." *DC*
◊162.7 Lands of Ghoshen!"] S1; Landsofghoshen!" S2
162.9 this sort . . . great deal.] S1; *om. DC*
162.9 hand and it] S1; hand. It *DC*
162.10 lacy bosom.] S1; *om. DC*
162.10–11 to her feet, stomping them] S1; straight up, stomping her foot. *DC*
162.13 into] S1; to *DC*
162.14 took] S1; toted *DC*
162.15 She could find . . . within her.] S1; She found no words. Wrath steamed in her. *DC*
162.16 off] S1; *om. DC*
162.17 off that floor.] S1; *om. DC*
162.17 your help.] S1; you. *DC*
162.18 there,] S1; *om. DC*
162.19 "All right," . . . is here."] S1; "Part of me's here!" declared Aunt Tildy. *DC*
162.20–21 Now stop . . . and bonnet!"] S1; Fetch my bonnet!" *DC*
162.22 I'm—so scared."] S1; *om. DC*
162.23 Aunt] S1; *om. DC*
162.23 bustled] S1; *om. DC*
162.23 "Is you scared of me?"] S1; "Of *me?*" *DC*
162.25 booger.] S1; ghostie! S3
162.25 I'm just me.] S1; *om. DC*
162.25 of] S1; *om. DC*
162.26 snivel and sopp.] S1; snivel-sopp. *DC*

162.26 feet] S1; heels *DC*
162.26–27 straight across the bridge of your nose!"] S1; flat across your nose!" *DC*
162.28 sobbing haste. She stood like a concerned animal,] S1; sobs, stood like something cornered, *DC*
162.31 "Out—in—front, Ma'am."] S1; "Out—in—front, mam." S2; "Down at the garage—, ◆ma'm [ma'am *DC*[1948], S3]." *DC*
162.32 out] S1; through *DC*
162.33 both directions of the street.] S1; up and down the streets. *DC*
162.33 way is it to] S1; way's *DC*
162.34 had to hold onto the rail of the steps] S1; held to the ◆ step [porch S3] rail, *DC*
162.34 "What are] S1; "What're *DC*
162.41 curving rain-wetted] S1; curved, rain-wet *DC*
163.1 into] S1; in *DC*
163.1–2 dices and cubes in] S1; dice and cube it *DC*
163.2 doing.] S1; doin' *DC*
163.3 cuts and sews] S1; cut and sew *DC*
163.4 leave] S1; let *DC*
163.4 do no good,] S1; do any good, *DC*
163.7–8 Emily pulled . . . Auntie."] S1; "Here we are, Auntie." Emily said, pulling to the ◆curb [kerb S3]. *DC*
163.9 was already] S1; had already S3
163.9 skedaddled] S1; popped *DC*
163.9 open door] S1; car *DC*
163.9 trotting] S1; was trotting S3
163.10 concrete] S1; mortuary *DC*
163.10 drive and around in back] S1; drive around back *DC*; drive, around behind S3
163.10 shining] S1; shiny *DC*
163.12 Aunt Tildy thrust to the attack, immediately.] S1; *om. DC*
163.13 "Young man,"] S1; "You!" *DC*
163.13 shout] S1; attack *DC*
163.13–14 unloading the basket] S1; with the wicker *DC*
163.14 "young man,] S1; *om. DC*
163.14 Put it right down!"] S1; *om. DC*
163.15 carrying the basket] S1; *om. DC*
163.16 of them] S1; *om. DC*
163.17 "But that's my body you got] S1; "That's my body *DC*
163.17–18 declared Auntie, brandishing her parasol.] S1; She brandished the parasol. *DC*
*163.19 third] S1; second *DC*
163.20 Madame.] S1; madame. S2, *DC*; madam. S3

163.21 That probed . . . Tildy's pride.] S1; *om. DC*
163.22 cried. "I'll] S1; cried, wounded. "I'll *DC*
163.22 only weigh] S1; weigh only *DC*
163.22 one hundred and ten] S1, *DC*[1948], S3; 110 S2, *DC*
163.23 with funny eyes.] S1; casually. *DC*
163.23–24 measurements,] S1; measure, *DC*
163.24 and eat dinner.] S1; to supper. *DC*
163.25 hot] S1; *om. DC*
163.25–26 through a large door into a hall,] S1; *om. DC*
163.26 the] S1; a *DC*
163.26 hall and into] S1; hall into *DC*
163.27 man in a clean white smock stood awaiting its] S1; white-smocked man awaited the wicker's *DC*
163.29 personality . . . himself.] S1; entire personality of the man. *DC*
163.29–30 deposited and the] S1; deposited, the *DC*
163.34 "I'm] S1; *om. DC*
163.34–35 sentiments, but] S1; sentiments, neat, but *DC*
163.35 seem to] S1; *om. DC*
163.35 other men.] S1; fellows. *DC*
◊163.38 The] S1; "The S2
163.38 puddling] S1; puddlin' *DC*
163.39 "We have] S1; *om. DC*
163.39 working] S1; works *DC*
163.40 "Well," Auntie continued, "as] S1; "No matter. As *DC*
163.40 said,] S1; stated, *DC*
163.41 like me.] S1; *om. DC*
163.41 And] S1; *om. DC*
164.1 cooking turkey] S1; cookin' ham *DC*
164.1 almost Easter time.] S1; near Easter. *DC*
164.1–2 I got people to worry about.] S1; *om. DC*
164.2 Emily to . . . knitting—"] S1; I got Emily to feed, sweaters to knit, clocks to wind—"
164.3 The mortician . . . perturbed.] S1; *om. DC*
164.3 "I'm sure you're] S1; "You are *DC*
164.4 philanthropical, Madame, but] S1; philanthropical, no doubt of it, ◆madame [madam S3], but *DC*
164.4 no time.] S1; work. *DC*
164.5 just] S1; *om. DC*
164.5 evident] S1; apparent *DC*
164.5–6 glance at his assorted scalpels and instruments.] S1; winnowing of his knives, tubes, jars, and instruments. *DC*

164.7 Aunt] S1; *om. DC*
164.7 "If you lays] S1; "You lay *DC*
164.7 beat] S1; thrash *DC*
164.8 she assured him.] S1; *om. DC*
164.9 brushed] S1; laid *DC*
164.9–10 moth. ¶ "Oh,] S1; moth. "George *DC*
164.10 "Oh, Hemmings," . . . the men.] S1; "George," he called with a suave gentleness. *DC*
164.11 outside,] S1; out *DC*
164.12 fellow.] S1; approaching George. *DC*
164.13 backside,] S1; back-side, *DC*
164.13 going] S1; goin' *DC*
164.14 The assistant came and held onto Aunt Tildy's] S1; George took her *DC*
164.14–17 please." ¶ | ¶ TILDY] S1; please." ¶ Tildy *DC*
164.17 herself easily.] S1; herself. Easily. *DC*
164.17 It wasn't hard with the way] S1; *om. DC*
164.18–19 late stage. "There," . . . "See?"] S1; late day. "See?" she said, pleased with her ability. *DC*
164.12 basket] S1; lid *DC*
164.22 double-takes] S1; scrutinies he *DC*
164.22–23 body was— . . . couldn't be but—] S1; body inside was . . . it *seemed* . . . *could* it be? . . . maybe . . . yes . . . no . . . well, uh . . . it just *couldn't* be, but . . . *DC*
164.23 suddenly.] S1; abruptly. *DC*
164.24 wide.] S1; saucer-wide. *DC*
164.25 "Madame,] S1; "Madam, S3
164.25 in] S1; *om. DC*
◊164.25–26 Eh—is she—relative of yours?"] S1; She is—a—relative—of yours?" *DC*
164.27 relative.] S1; relation. *DC*
164.30 proposition.] S1; idea. *DC*
164.30–31 to clear the fog.] S1; *om. DC*
164.31 decided. "Things] S1; decided. "No. Things *DC*
◊164.31–32 He busied . . . make preparations.] S1; He went on fumbling with his tools. *DC*
164.32 "Take] S1; "Show *DC*
164.32 William.] S1; George. *DC*
164.32–33 the other men and take her away.] S1; help from the others. *DC*
164.33 around."] S1; present." *DC*
164.34–36 When the four . . . won't budge."] S1; The four men assembled and converged. Aunt Tildy was a lace fortress, arms crossed in defiance. "Won't budge," she said. *DC*

164.36 continued to repeat the phrase] S1; repeated this *DC*
164.37 preparation] S1; preparations S2, *DC*
164.37 resting] S1; slumber *DC*
164.38 stand] S1; fight *DC*
164.39 herself] S1; *om. DC*
164.39 funeral] S1; *om. DC*
164.40 gray] S1; grey S2, *DC*
164.40 smell of flowers.] S1; flower smell. *DC*
164.41 lady,"] S1; mam," *DC*; ma'am," S3
165.1 sitting] S1; sittin' *DC*
165.1–5 Sit right . . . move her.] S1; *om. DC*
165.5 She just sat there,] S1; She sat *DC*
165.6 lace at her throat,] S1; throat lace, *DC*
165.6 high shining shoe tapping impatiently.] S1; high-ankled, button-shoe tapping irritated rhythms. *DC*
165.6–7 If they . . . her parasol.] S1; If a man got in whopping distance, she gave him a parasol whop. *DC*
165.7 them a whop with] S1; them with S2
165.8 her she] S1; her, now, she *DC*
165.8 of—slipped—away.] S1; of—slipped away. *DC*
165.9 (1) the] S1; *om. DC*
165.9–11 from his office . . . the aisle.] S1; in his office and came toddling down the aisle to investigate. *DC*
165.11 whispered, finger] S1; whispered to all of them, finger *DC*
165.11–12 "Show more respect.] S1; "More respect, more respect. *DC*
165.12 Oh. Madame,] S1; Oh, madame, *DC*[1948]; Oh, madam, S3
165.14 "And] S1; *om. DC*
165.15 over] S1; back *DC*
165.16 "Yes?"] S1; "Yee-ess." *DC*
165.17 fiddling] S1; fiddlin' *DC*
165.18 lady, and my] S1; lady. My *DC*
165.19 secrets.] S1; secret. *DC*
165.19–20 prying around, cutting it or hurting it in any way."] S1; pryin' and probin', cuttin' it or hurtin' it any way." *DC*
165.21 a trifle] S1; *om. DC*
165.21–22 had not . . . bodies.] S1; hadn't correlated bodies yet. *DC*
165.22 "I don't—see," . . . helplessness.] S1; He looked at her, in blank helplessness. *DC*
165.23 turkey] S1; pigeon *DC*
165.23 stuffed—"] S1; stuffed! she told him. *DC*
165.24 verify this claim.] S1; check. *DC*
165.24 of] S1; *om. DC*

165.26 the] S1; *om. DC*
165.26 Mr.] S1; *om. DC*
165.26–27 pale and shaking, to confront Auntie.] S1; three shades whiter. *DC*
165.31–32 up, . . . "You are] S1; up. "You're *DC*
165.33 "I? I!"] S1; "I am!" *DC*
165.33 morning! Now, looky] S1; mornin'! Looky *DC*
165.35 extracting] S1; pumping *DC*
165.36–38 Auntie swayed . . . you say?"] S1; *om. DC*
165.39 oh,] S1; *om. DC*
165.39 away, there's] S1; away, now, there's *DC*
165.40 blood is] S1; blood's *DC*
165.40 from the body] S1; *om. DC*
165.40 it'll soon] S1; soon the body'll *DC*
165.40 A-1] S1; *om. DC*
165.42 the] S1; *om. DC*
166.1 was on] S1; jumped onto *DC*
166.1 "Cutting] S1; "Cuttin' *DC*
166.4–6 "Well, we . . . "Yes'm?"] S1; *om. DC*
166.7–8 "You are going . . . nice] S1; "March straight in and tell that Cut-em-up to pump all that fine *DC*
166.9 old] S1; *om. DC*
166.9 of that body,] S1; *om. DC*
166.10 you'll] S1; *om. DC*
166.11 back] S1; over *DC*
166.11 keeping.] S1; keepin'! *DC*
166.11 You hear, you HEAR!"] S1; You *hear!*" *DC*
166.13 "Awright then, snigger-britches.] S1; "All right. *DC*
166.13 setting] S1; settin' *DC*
166.13–14 on this spot for] S1; *om. DC*
166.14 years.] S1; year. S2, *DC*
166.14 in] S1; near *DC*
166.15 square in] S1; squirt up *DC*
166.16 fumbled] S1; groped *DC*
166.16 around in the weakening interior of his] S1; around his weakening *DC*
166.17 squeak.] S1; groan. *DC*
166.17 "Oh, no. No.] S1; *om. DC*
166.17–18 Heavens. Millions of dollars will be lost.] S1; *om. DC*
166.20 aisle and in] S1; aisle. In *DC*
166.20–23 distance one . . . president.] S1; distance he made a series of phone-calls. Half an hour later cars roared up in front of the mortuary. Three vice-presidents of the mortuary came down the aisle with their hysterical President. *DC*

166.24 All six . . . diplomats.] S1; *om. DC*
166.26 well-chosen cuss words.] S1; ◆well chosen infurnalities [well-chosen infernalities DC^{1948}, S3]. *DC*
166.28 home-work] S1; homework, at least *DC*
166.28 amenable] S1; *om. DC*
166.28 had been] S1; was *DC*
166.29 mortician came out of] S1; mortician walked from *DC*
166.29–30 smiling quietly and smoking cigar.] S1; smiling amiably, smoking a big black cigar. *DC*
166.31 looked] S1; stared *DC*
166.32 "Where . . . horrified.] S1; "Where'd you put the *ashes?*" she cried, in horror. *DC*
166.33 smiled imperturbably] S1; grinned imperturably *DC*
166.34–35 The committee . . . the others.] S1; The conference broke up. *DC*
166.36–37 "Madame, we . . . Now, in] S1; "Madame, in *DC*; "Madam, in S3
166.37 throw] S1; force *DC*
166.38–167.1 you?" ¶ | ¶ AUNTIE looked the vultures over.] S1; you?" ¶ Auntie scanned the vultures.
167.1 mind. No, I wouldn't mind at] S1; mind at *DC*
167.3 Harrington] S1; Carrington S3
167.3 cheeks.] S1; jowls. *DC*
167.3 "Our proposition is this.] S1; *om. DC*
167.7 "Without] S1; "No *DC*
167.8 "Without formaldehyde!"] S1; "No formaldehyde." *DC*
167.9 "With] S1; *om. DC*
167.10 "Blood. Yes, yes, oh, my God, yes, if] S1; "Blood, my God, yes, blood, if *DC*
167.11 Auntie nodded a prim head.] S1; A prim nod. *DC*
167.11 Fix it up, and it's a deal!"] S1; Fix 'er up. It's a deal!" *DC*
167.12 glared] S1; snapped fingers *DC*
167.12 "Well, don't stand there!] S1; "Don't *stand* there, you mental incompetent. *DC*
*◊167.13–16 added Auntie. "EASY, EASY," said] S1; warned Tildy. ¶ | ¶ "Easy, easy," said *DC*
167.16 on] S1; to *DC*
167.17 easy."] S1; *om. DC*
167.18 They placed . . . floor.] S1; *om. DC*
167.19 looking."] S1; lookin'." *DC*
167.19 Then] S1; *om. DC*
167.19 backward] S1; back *DC*
167.21 There was a sudden biting] S1; A biting *DC*
167.21–22 twisting nausea and a spinning] S1; unlikely nausea, and a giddy whirling. *DC*

167.22 It was like two drops of matter coalescing.] S1; Like two drops of matter fusing. *DC*

167.23 So slow to do. So hard.] S1; Slow to do. Hard. *DC*

167.23 fight] S1; squirm *DC*

167.24 discarded husk of chrysalis.] S1; discarded dry husk of flinty chrysalis. *DC*

167.25 All the faces . . . struggles.] S1; The mortuary people watched Aunt Tildy's wriggles. *DC*

167.25–26 Mr. Harrington was evidently concerned.] S1; Mr. Carrington was deeply concerned. *DC*

167.26–27 He kept . . . gestures.] S1; He wrung his fingers and tried to assist with boosting and grunting moves of his hands and arms. *DC*

167.27 The mortician was frankly skeptical and in grim humor.] S1; The mortician, frankly ◆skeptical [sceptical *DC*[1948]], watched with idle, amused eyes. *DC*

167.28 The others just stared.] S1; *om. DC*

167.29 cold granite stone.] S1; cold, long granite. *DC*

167.30 Fighting] S1; Squeezing *DC*

167.32 fumbling inside] S1; rustling in *DC*

167.33 "Get to your] S1; "Find your *DC*

167.34 rose further,] S1; grabbled up, *DC*

167.38 the warmth of the room,] S1; the room warmth, *DC*

167.38 presence] S1; reality *DC*

167.39 against] S1; on *DC*

168.2 shouted.] S1; snapped. *DC*

168.3 All] S1; *om. DC*

168.3 dulled] S1; dull *DC*

168.3–4 Opening up to let them in.] S1; *om. DC*

168.4–5 The harsh, . . . Mr. Harrington.] S1; The harsh, expectant breath of the mortician, shaken; the whimpering Mr. ◆Harrington [Carrington *DC*[1948], S3]; her own crackling voice. *DC*

168.6 she cried.] S1; cried she. S2, *DC*

168.11 mortician's crew.] S1; morticians: *DC*

168.13 said Aunt Tildy, finally.] S1; she said, finally. *DC*

168.20–21 humor. ¶ You] S1; humor. You *DC*; humour. You *DC*[1948], S3

168.26 back] S1; behind *DC*

168.26 behind] S1; with *DC*

168.28 for the boys overseas.] S1; *om. DC*

168.28 She's] S1; ¶ She's S3

168.29 along.] S1; on. *DC*

168.30–38 "And, if you're . . . more coffee? *There.*] S1; *om.* S3

168.30 especially] S1; 'specially *DC*

168.37 sewing] S1; sewin' *DC*

Line-End Hyphenation

160.24 no-/sirree.] nosirree.
162.13 sneak-/thief!"] sneak-thief!"
163.33 gentle-/woman."] gentle-woman."
164.22 double-/takes] double-takes

18. The Trunk Lady (December 15, 1943)

The talented and versatile multi-genre author Henry Kuttner, an early Bradbury mentor, considered "The Trunk Lady" to be one of the best of the eighteen murder mystery tales that Bradbury would publish in the mid- and late-1940s. A completion date of December 15, 1943, for a 7,000-word draft appears, along with a subsequent typed marginal note ("SOLD"), in Bradbury's composition and submission log. His sales record shows a March 1944 payment from *Detective Tales* and a subsequent note (in Bradbury's hand) recording his approximated recollection of a post-commission check for $75.00. Nolan's listing of sales by Julius Schwartz includes the actual sales date of February 18, 1944, and the $82.00 pre-commission price. Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index does not include any of the purchases by the crime magazines controlled by Popular Publications, but Schwartz sent the post-commission check (actually $73.80) in a letter dated February 26, 1944.

"The Trunk Lady" first reached print in the September 1944 issue of *Detective Tales* (S1), with an uncredited two-page title illustration (Johnny on the stairs above the cocktail party). It was reset and reprinted with a different uncredited title illustration (Johnny in his bedroom) in the August 1952 issue of *New Detective* (S2), another magazine in Popular's stable of crime pulps. The story was revived for the August 1960 issue of *Detective Tales*' British counterpart (S3) with part of the original S1 title illustration, and again for the July 1965 issue of *Mike Shayne Mystery Magazine* (S4), with a new series of uncredited title and interior sketches. S2 was editorially styled throughout the text; although section breaks were removed from the British S3, collation shows that S2 (rather than S1) is the direct typesetting source for S3. Further collation shows that S4 was set directly from S1; however, S4 contains a fair number of brief expansions and cuts that are almost certainly authorial. Many of the original S1 section breaks are retained in S4, although the original three-chapter format was eliminated.

Bradbury held back "The Trunk Lady" (along with most of his detective genre fiction) from his story collections, but unfortunately Julius Schwartz had not limited Popular's detective magazine purchases to first serial rights; subsequent holders of these rights forced Bradbury to include "The Trunk Lady," along with

most of the Popular Publications stories, in the 1984 Dell collection *A Memory of Murder* (*MeM*). Bradbury did not revise the story for *MeM*, but his editors obscured the original novella flavor of S1 by removing the three chapter headings. Dell editors also heavily styled spelling, punctuation, and grammar prior to publication. Bradbury used *MeM* to win back his rights to his crime tales, and never allowed "The Trunk Lady" to appear in any of his subsequent collections. He did, however, allow it to appear in one multiple-author anthology, *Horror Times Ten* (1967).

"The Trunk Lady" was the first of six crime stories that Bradbury wrote, almost without interruption from his other genre passions, between December 1943 and early March 1944. Schwartz acknowledged receipt of the typescript on December 27, 1943, and conveyed his high hopes for the story: "I personally thought it was a wonderful story and so different from the run-of-the-mill stuff. It's not pulp, of course, but I have a hunch it has enough interesting angles to persuade some editor to take it." He didn't have to look past Mike Tilden at *Detective Tales*, who purchased it during February 1944. During the late 1940s Bradbury made the acquaintance of Frederic Dannay (Daniel Nathan), half of the writing and publishing pseudonym Ellery Queen; in June 1949 Bradbury still thought enough of his crime fiction to send a dozen of the published stories (including "The Trunk Lady") to Dannay for review. It would be another four years before Bradbury was able to break into the more mainstream world of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, but by that time he was no longer interested in reprinting his early stories of this kind; in fact, "The Trunk Lady" (through S2, S3, and S4) had a longer reprint history than most of these older crime tales.

Bradbury's mentor Henry Kuttner, winding down his military service on the East Coast, wrote soon after publication to praise the stylistic and narrative restraint of both "Yesterday I Lived" (volume 3) and "The Trunk Lady": "The handling of the Villain in 'The Trunk Lady' was especially delicate and unpleasant, and both yarns had a touch of freshness and ingenuity that you could never get by writing for the fantasy books alone. I'm glad you're branching out." The villain's backstory in "The Trunk Lady" had emerged out of Bradbury's abiding fascination with the trauma of childbirth; the murder evolves relentlessly from a mother's death in childbirth long ago, the widower-father's rejection of the little girl, and the child's hatred of the father who abandoned her. As a young woman, she is destined to become the body in the trunk.

Bradbury had already worked through variations on birth trauma in "The Shape of Things" ("Tomorrow's Child," selection 4) and "The Small Assassin" (volume 1, selection 23). Parallels to "The Trunk Lady," where everyone except the murderer dismisses the boy's claims to have seen a body in an attic trunk, can be seen again in "The Screaming Woman" (1948; published 1951). Bradbury's recurring sense of household attics as nostalgic and sometimes haunting gate-

ways through time can also be found in "Reunion" (selection 13), "A Scent of Sarsaparilla" (1953), and "Autumn Afternoon" (1947; published 2007).

In the absence of Bradbury's submitted typescript, S1, the published form closest to Bradbury's earliest settled intention for the story, stands as copy-text. S2, S3, S4, and *MeM* are all sources of necessary corrections in the text; however, S4's authorial revisions, prepared two decades after initial publication, represent a subsequent intention; they are not emended into the copy-text, but are presented in the list of post-copy-text substantives below.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49, with a variant payment of $75.00 written in Bradbury's hand); author's agency listing (c. 1950); author's notecard story file (c. 1943–1975); Schwartz to Bradbury, Dec. 27, 1943, and Feb. 26, 1944; Kuttner to Bradbury, Jul. 8, 1944; Albright–Bradbury interview, Mar. 31, 2003.

—JE

Textual Notes

169.*[title]* S1's opening editorial teaser draws very distantly on the short paragraph at 179.32–35 ("Mother . . . nothing."); the teaser is not authorial, however, and erroneously conflates the activities of the mansion's cocktail party and the activities of the various family isolatos in their rooms upstairs: "Downstairs, the cocktail party went its noisy, crazy way, with Uncle Flinny telling his weird and brooding bedtime stories, with Grandma guzzling her brandy. . . . But Johnny didn't care, for he and the Trunk Lady would show 'em all! They'd become—the death of the party!" S2's teaser offers an editorial variation: "Downstairs, the cocktail party went its noisy, crazy way. . . . But Johnny didn't care, for he and his new-found friend would show 'em . . . if the lady would ever leave the cobwebby old attic trunk!" S3 has no framing teaser, but S4's is tersely editorial: "Johnny's parents liked to entertain and that made him feel 'left out' . . . until he made a terrifying discovery."

179.10 Uncle Flinny!"] Johnny's question conveys a sense of unease and apprehension; the copy-text's sense of surprised exclamation rather than inquiry is intentional, and stands without any emendation to the closing punctuation.

182.1 The body] The ellipsis points inserted above this paragraph in S2 (in place of the original section break) signal the beginning of an editorial shift in placement of the story's remaining section breaks. The ellipsis points, as well as the editorial rebreaks, are rejected as non-authorial.

182.30 kill her!] Johnny's stream-of-consciousness question is intentionally desperate rather than truly interrogatory; Bradbury's exclamatory closing punctuation is therefore retained.

182.39 When Johnny] S2's forced section break at this point is rejected; Bradbury's continuous text is retained.

183.15 Mother sat] S2's elimination of Bradbury's final section break at this point is part of a pattern of editorial pacing impositions late in the story. The original break is retained.

Emendations

169.[title]* The Trunk Lady] *MeM*; THE TRUNK LADY | By RAY BRADBURY S1
171.7 There is] S2; There' is S1
171.21 That was] S2; "That was S1
172.2 William's] S3; Williams' S1
172.35 kidnapped] S2; kidnaped S1
175.32 too?] *MeM*; too. S1
175.37 mannikins] S2; mannequins S1 *Also* 175.39
176.20 mannikins?] S2; mannequins? S1
182.3 mannikin^] S2; mannikin, S1
184.19 rolling.] *MeM*; rolling. | THE END S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

169.[title]* THE TRUNK LADY | By ◆ RAY BRADBURY [Ray Bradbury S2, S3] S1; The Trunk Lady *MeM*
169.1 CHAPTER ONE The Lady of Death!] S1; *om.* S2, S3, S4, *MeM*
169.7 all to] S1; all o S2
169.10 had gotten] S1; had got *MeM*
169.14 further] S1; farther S2, S3, *MeM*
169.20 always locked,] S1; always kept locked, S4
169.22–23 unlocked. ¶ Johnny] S1; unlocked. It wasn't in the least like the shiny, new trunks Mom and Dad had taken with them on their last trip to Europe. ¶ Johnny S4
170.7–10 "—you've . . . ELLIE."] S1; ^—you've . . . Ellie.^ S2, S3, *MeM*
170.13 had been carried] S1; have been carried S4
170.14–15 slumber! ¶ The attic] S1; slumber! It surely seemed as if it might have been that way. ¶ The attic S4
170.16–17 saying: ¶ "Are] S1; saying out loud: "Are S4; saying, "Are *MeM*
170.18 killed you?] S1; killed you, didn't they? S4
170.19–20 of the society Menlos] S1; of the Long Island and Palm Springs Menlos, S4
170.39–41 glitter. He . . . yelled it. ¶ "Mom,] S1; glitter. ¶ He yelled it: "Mom, S4
171.7–10 body!" ¶ | ¶ MOTHER] S1; body!" ¶ Mother S4, *MeM*
171.13 "Please forgive] S1; "We must all try to forgive S4
171.18 The spangles slipped] S1; The hem of her dress slipped S4
171.24 the brass] S1; the old-fashioned brass S4

171.24 door. She] S1; door. It was just like the trunk. As old-fashioned as Grandma herself, and the big house before it had been remodeled. She S4
171.32 run get] S1; run and get S3, S4
171.33 Scat!] S1; Right now, Johnny. S4
171.34 the wine pantry,] S1; the liquor cabinet in Dad's study, S4
171.36–37 quickly: ¶ "Who's] S1; quickly: "Who's S4
171.40 soft hands . . . liquor.] S1; soft right hand closed over the neck of the bottle. S4
171.40 God. Now] S1; God! I needed this. Now S4
171.41 get drunk!"] S1; get stoned!" S4
◊172.2 Williams'] S1; William's S2
172.2 mannikins] S1; mannequins *MeM*
172.6 attending his] S1; attending to his S2, S3
172.11 "Uh—I . . . station."] S1; "Uh—I—give me the police." S4
172.12–13 operator's: ¶ "Hang] S1; operator's: "Hang S2
172.15–16 He sat . . . frustration.] S1; He turned from the phone, tears making his eyelids prickle. S4
172.18 He was] S1; Johnny Menlo was S4
172.19–20 round, . . . looking.] S1; round, black, gentle. S4
172.24–26 Being raised . . . stories.] S1; *om.* S4
172.27 Shoot."] S1; *om.* S4
172.28 black trousers] S1; gray flannel trousers S4
172.30 very beautiful—"] S1; extremely beautiful—" S4
172.31 *Oh! oh!*] S1; *Oh! Oh!* S2; *Oh-oh! MeM*
172.32 *to this.*] S1; *to all this silly nonsense.* S4
172.33 "this beautiful] S1; "this radiantly beautiful S4
172.34 knight.] S1; knight in shining armor. S4
◊172.35 kidnaped the beautiful woman] S1; kidnapped the Knight's beautiful wife S4; kidnapped the beautiful woman *MeM*
172.38 Uncle] S1; ¶ Uncle S4
172.39 "The husband chased] S1; "The knight pursued S4
172.40 wife] S1; beautiful young bride S4
172.41 gone forever. Forever."] S1; gone forever." S4
172.41–173.1 Forever." ¶ | ¶ Uncle] S1; Forever." ¶ Uncle S2, S3, *MeM*; forever." ¶ Uncle
173.3–4 His eyes . . . trembled.] S1; His lips trembled and his eyes glowed, dark, round. S4
173.7 One, and . . . he did!] S1; One. And Johnny, wonder of wonders, he did! S4
173.8 down, but . . . he found] S1; down. But he found S4
173.11–12 more. ¶ Uncle] S1; more. Uncle *MeM*
173.15 "Thanks. Thanks very] S1; "Thanks very S4
173.16 "Thanks for the swell] S1; "It was a swell S4

173.17 "Unh?"] S1; "Uh?" S4
173.18 yes. Anytime. Anytime at all."] S1; yes. Any time. Any time at all." S2; yes. Tomorrow I'll have a new bedtime story for you, Johnny." S4
173.20 "Goodnight,] S1; Good night, S2, *MeM*
173.25–27 "The things I've had . . . Guh!"] S1; ^The things he'd had . . . Guh!" S4
173.34 tripping of Cousin William.] S1; trippling of Couson William, back and forth across his room. S4
173.41 attic, heart] S1; attic, his heart S4
174.7–9 CHAPTER TWO | The Plastic Corpse] S1; The Corpse S2; *om.* S4, *MeM*
174.17 like at] S1; as at *MeM*
174.21 *come* down.] S1; *come* come down. S4
174.22 arm limp,] S1; arms limp S2, S3, *MeM*
174.27 And the way] S1; ¶ And the way S4
174.29 gray clam,] S1; gray calm, S4
174.30–31 bannister.] S1; banister. *MeM*
174.37 mannikin!"] S1; mannequin!" *MeM*
174.40 mannikin."] S1; mannequin." *MeM*
175.8 plaster!"] S1; plastic!" S4
175.17–19 A heart . . . was like mercury.] S1; *om.* S4
◊175.37 mannequins] S1; mannikins S2, S3, S4 *Also* 175.39
176.4(2) –5 Her whole . . . taste.] S1; *om.* S4
176.13–16 "—you've . . . Ellie."] S1; ^—you've . . . Ellie.^ S2, *MeM*
◊176.20 mannequins?] S1; mannikins? S2, S3, S4
176.27 servants quarters] S1; servants' quarters S2, S4, *MeM*
176.27–28 the big house.] S1; the house. S4
177.9 his Buck Rogers disintegrators] S1; his Martians and disintegrators S4
177.11 Corpses. Ah!"] S1; Corpses. Where will it end?" S4
177.29 Her pompadour was] S1; Her piled up hair was S4
177.29 toppled over] S1; topped over S4
178.1–3 CHAPTER THREE | "Let's Play Murder!"] S1; *om.* S4, *MeM*
178.5 nickel] S1; dime S4
178.11 motion picture murders] S1; motion picture and television murders S4
178.23 ¶ "Mine] S1; ^"Mine S4
178.36 want no—trouble,"] S1; want—trouble," S2, S3
178.42–179.1 Forget it. Forget it."] S1; Forget it." S4
179.1 it." She] S1; it. ¶ "She S4
179.2 sonny.] S1; Johnny. S4
179.10 Flinny!"] S1; Flinny?" S4
179.13 "Yes. . . . story."] S1; "Tonight's just like every other night, Johnny. And this is a very special story. A very extra-special bedtime story." S4

179.16 awhile] S1; a while S2, S3, *MeM*
179.18–21 door. ¶ | ¶ THE] S1; door. ¶ The S3, S4, *MeM*
179.34 mannikin] S1; mannequin *MeM*
179.37 since the—incident.] S1; since—he'd found the Trunk Lady in the attic and the others had become strangers too. S4
179.41 mannikin,] S1; mannequin^ *MeM*
180.3 it. Johnny] S1; it. ¶ Johnny S4
180.7 bannister,] S1; banister *MeM*
180.9–19 Downstairs] S1; She was downstairs S4
180.11 servants quarters] S1; servants' quarters S2, S3, *MeM*
180.20 nor that] S1; not that S2, S3
◊180.27–28 Farther down was the greenhouse and the garden toolshed.] S1; Farther down, the greenhouse and the tool shed. S2, S3
180.28 Johnny ran.] S1; ¶ Johnny ran. S2, S3
180.35 stairs . . . Then—it was gone.] S1; stairs. ¶ Then, abruptly, it was gone. S4
180.39 half-light,] S1; half-flight, S4
180.39 She!] S1; *om.* S4
180.40 flecked shadow—] S1; etched shadow— S2, S3
181.19–21 He reached . . . fainting.] S1; He reached the rim of stirring shadow and screamed. ¶ The universe seemed suddenly to explode. ¶ The cocktail dress whirled madly, now toppling in a drunken insanity. The Trunk Lady bent and there came a hoarse, panting sound. ¶ She was fainting. S2
181.19 seemed to] S1; seemed suddenly to S2
181.24 him, . . . sobbing] S1; him, closing tightly over his nostrils and sobbing S4
181.26 The thought slammed him!] S1; The thought made his heart stand still, then beat so loudly there was a hammering in his chest. S4
181.33 Much thicker!] S1; *om.* S4
181.33–34 inwardly, drawing air in an awful slobbering whistle.] S1; inwardly. S4
181.37 by] S1; there at S2, S3
182.2–3 mannikin hand thrown] S1; mannikin thrown S4; mannequin hand thrown *MeM*
182.3 into light.] S1; into the light. S2, S3
◊182.3 mannikin] S1; mannequin *MeM*
182.9 "Dad," . . . *don't!*"] S1; *Dad* he tried to yell. *Don't, don't, please* don't! *MeM*
182.13 "I didn't mean to," Johnny] S1; *I didn't mean to*, Johnny *MeM*
182.15 dying!"] S1; dying! It was all your doing." S4
182.16 "I didn't . . . Lady,"] S1; *I didn't mean to find the Trunk Lady*, *MeM*
*182.30 her!] S1; her? S2, S3
182.33–34 "Don't kill . . . of it."] S1; ^Don't kill . . . of it.^ S4
182.40 a dim] S1; the dim S4
183.2 mannikin] S1; mannequin *MeM*

183.3 small rolling] S1; small, sending it rolling S4
183.4 One of] S1; It was one of S4
183.7 was crazy, so crazy] S1; was so crazy, so crazy S2
183.9–10 eyes, and he was shaking like a sick dog.] S1; eyes, his shoulders and arms shaking. S4
183.10 on all over it.] S1; on in all of the windows. S4
183.12–15 tiles. . . . ¶ | ¶ MOTHER] S1; tiles. . . . ¶ Mother S2
183.16 Mom. "Mom?"] S1; Mom. ¶ "Mom?" S2, S3
183.19 Dad?" He] S1; Dad?" ¶ He S2
183.40 damn!"] S1; damn, son!" S2, S3
184.16 Johnny."] S1; Johnny. Go to sleep now." S4
◊184.19 rolling. | THE END] S1; rolling. *MeM*

Line-End Hyphenation

170.2 air-/tight] air-tight
172.26 bed-/time] bedtime
180.31 out-/lying] outlying
180.39 half-/light] half-light
183.11 back-/door] back-door

19. Jack-in-the-Box (January 1944)

This story does not appear in Bradbury's composition and submission log, and there is no evidence that it was ever circulated by Julius Schwartz for consideration by the pulps. The sole evidence for dating the story appears in Bradbury's notecard file, where two cards record his extensive submission of "Jack-in-the-Box" to the mainstream magazines during 1946–47. His penciled holograph note, "Started circulating in January, 1943," appears at the top of the first card. Unfortunately, there is little evidence of his major market submissions during the mid-1940s; with the exception of a brief and unsuccessful four-story circulation trial with New York agent Ed Bodin in early 1944, Bradbury handled his own major market magazine submissions until the fall of 1947, when Don Congdon became his representative for all markets. The lack of any pulp circulation history, and the phrasing of his penciled card note, suggests that he briefly circulated "Jack-in-the-Box" for major market review during the last years of the war.

But the quality of the story, when compared to the broader development of his fiction at that time, also suggests that the January 1943 date is probably a year too early for initial composition. The handwriting and pencil medium of his notation match a 1949-dated circulation note on the same card, providing further grounds to view the January 1943 notation as a late-1940s misremembered

reference to an actual completion date of January 1944. Given his tendency to circulate immediately after completing a strong story, composition can be dated to January 1944 with a fair degree of confidence. A single unnumbered typescript opening page, almost certainly from this first stage of composition (TSπ), survives in the Albright Collection; it is too preliminary to fit in with any surviving form of the complete text.

During the spring of 1946, Bradbury included this yet-unpublished tale among the stories submitted for *Dark Carnival* (designated *DC*), his first collection. This decision triggered a new wave of circulation; in fact, his subsequent efforts to secure a magazine sale for "Jack-in-the-Box" prior to the May 1947 release date of *DC* were extraordinary. He began with a submission to *Harper's Bazaar* on June 20, 1946; from there "Jack-in-the-Box" went to Whit Burnett's *Story* magazine on the June 28, where it was finally declined on August 22nd. Two days later Bradbury sent it on to the editors of *Today's Woman*, and almost secured a sale. There was a high demand for Bradbury stories from the staff of this new postwar magazine, and this story received close scrutiny. "Jack-in-the-Box" was his second submission to *Today's Woman*, but it was so "off trail" that each of the staff editors saw it differently—as a modern take on the legend of Buddha's childhood, as an attack on "Momism," and as an anti-technology cautionary tale. It was reluctantly returned in mid-September.

By the end of 1946, "Jack-in-the-Box" had been rejected by many major-market magazines, including *Good Housekeeping*, *The American Mercury*, *Charm*, *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, and the literary magazine *Tomorrow*. Bradbury's pace of circulation slowed a bit during 1947; from January until August, it was declined by Marshall Fields's ill-fated and never-published *USA Magazine*, *McCall's*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier's*, *Ladies Home Journal*, the literary magazine *Touchstone*, and *Town and Country*. By this time *Dark Carnival* was out, and Bradbury retired the story from magazine circulation until 1949, when a second pass through *Charm* earned a sale. Once again, however, the oddness of "Jack-in-the-Box" did not seem to fit the perceived readership, and the story was never used. Finally, in 1951, the story reached the periodicals through Donald Wollheim's hybrid magazine-anthology, *Avon Fantasy Reader #17* (S1).

Wollheim's Avon series was primarily a reprint venture, and S1 was prepared directly from the *DC* text. But Bradbury was not yet fully satisfied with "Jack-in-the-Box," and soon began a complete rewrite of the original tale. His first attempt at rewriting the story (TS1) survives in the Albright collection; paper and typeface evidence indicate that it was composed during the early 1950s, perhaps just after the 1951 publication of S1. Two subsequent typescripts in the Albright Collection (TS2 and TS3) descend in a linear stem from TS1; these two stages complete the full rewrite of "Jack-in-the-Box" that Bradbury

undertook in late 1954 and early 1955 as he refashioned some of his best early tales for *The October Country* (*OC*).

Today the legacy of the *OC* first edition text of 1955 completely overshadows its *DC* precursor; this rewritten text descends on through the many American and British *OC* editions, the 1962 British *Small Assassin* collection (*SA*), the 1980 retrospective collection *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* (*SRB*) and its British counterparts, *SRB*^{1983} and *Ray Bradbury Stories*, volume 1 (*RBS1*). Although the basic story line, event sequencing, and dialog between mother and child follow the original *DC* form, the subsequent TS1, TS2, TS3, and *OC* progression represents a distinctly different and uncollatable version of "Jack-in-the-Box." The *DC* text, which was omitted from the abridged British 1948 first edition, only returned to print through the limited 2001 Gauntlet edition (*DC*^{2001})—a project that Bradbury approved, but one that lacks authorial input of any kind.

Copy-text for the present edition is the 1947 *DC* version of "Jack-in-the-Box," which stands as the form closest to Bradbury's original but unlocated circulating typescript of 1944. Bradbury read and corrected galleys and page proofs for *DC*, an option he did not have with his magazine publications. S1 provides a source of emendation to correct a few errors in *DC*. At two points where the original story text remains, the rewritten TS1 provides a source of emendation for two additional *DC* errors that remained uncorrected in S1. In all other respects, however, the completely rewritten and restructured form of TS1–TS3 and *OC* represent a very different intention from a later time in his career. That completely rewritten form cannot be presented in any meaningful way in the list of post-copy-text substantives; nevertheless, the rewrite follows the original story line and is readily available for comparison today in a wide range of *OC* and *SRB* editions.

"Jack-in-the-Box," Bradbury's story of an adolescent child who is forbidden from entering the world that exists beyond the walls of his mother's house, was inspired by a brief newspaper clipping of a primitive child raised in total seclusion in the midst of Chicago. For the exact setting, Bradbury transferred this "what if" to Waukegan, Illinois, where an aging gothic house in his childhood neighborhood had often captured his imagination. It was known to Bradbury as the Foley house, situated on Washington Street on the edge of the dark ravine that inspired so many of his Greentown stories. The reclusive mother's obsession with keeping her child indoors is based on the tragic death of the father, a pedestrian struck by a speeding car years earlier; this framing motivation echoes a core element of "The Crowd" (volume 1, selection 10), and anticipates the perils of "The Pedestrian." Clarisse McClellan, the figure who sparks Montag's full awakening from the inverted nightmare world of *Fahrenheit 451* and its source novella "The Fireman," suffers the same fate. The pedestrian-as-prey in the motivation of "Jack-in-the-Box" also has its roots in David Keller's

"Revolt of the Pedestrians," a story that Bradbury read as a teenager and always considered one of the best of the pre-Golden Age pulp stories.
Sources: Author's notecard file; Eller–Bradbury interviews.

—JE

Textual Notes

185.3 bang! but] The exclamation emphasizes a sound and does not stand as closing punctuation. The lower-case conjunction that follows the exclamation does not open a new sentence, and is retained without case emendation.

190.42 M'am] Here and at 191.4, the copy-text reading ("Mam") is emended to S1's contracted form of "Madame" ("M'am") to avoid reader confusion.

191.35 yourself? because] The last in a series of cascading questions opens without capitalization. "Because" is capitalized by emendation to make it consistent with the other questions in the surrounding text. Bradbury's later TS1 alternative (replacing the question mark with a comma) forms part of his subsequent intention to rewrite the surrounding text, and cannot be a source of emendation.

191.35–36 she demands all your thoughts and every thing you do?"] The copy-text reading is retained, but TS1's version illuminates where Bradbury was headed as he rewrote the story: "she demands all of your time and your thoughts?'"

193.28 Or out into *there?*] S1 carries forward the ambiguous *DC* reading ("Out into there.") Bradbury corrected the error by clarifying the relational pronoun's referent in TS1. Although the correction originates within the rewritten form of the story, this correction is needed to avoid reader confusion and is emended into the copy-text.

Emendations

186.3 there] S1; these *DC*
187.30 where] CE; were *DC*
*190.42 M'am] S1; Mam *DC Also* 191.4
191.6 know." He] S1; know." he *DC*
191.25 "Yes, yes."] S1; "Yes, yes," *DC*
*191.35 yourself? Because] CE; yourself? because *DC*
*193.28 Or out into *there?*] TS1; Out into *there. DC*
197.25 down to the] TS1; down the *DC*

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

◊186.3 these] *DC*; there S1
*◊190.42 Mam] *DC*; M'am S1 *Also* 191.4
◊191.6 know." he] *DC*; know." He S1

Line-End Hyphenation

196.4 pre-/historic] pre-historic

20. Where Everything Ends (January 1944)

By the end of 1943, Bradbury's Muse had returned to the kind of crime stories generated during the late summer and early fall. "Where Everything Ends" was one of six such stories written between December 1943 and March 1944; in fact, his only departure from his new genre home during the entire winter of 1943–44 was a disappointing first draft of "Rocket Skin" (selection 23) and his masterful weird tale "The Jar" (selection 25). Five of the new crime stories reached print fairly quickly, but the creative trail of "Where Everything Ends" was problematic from the start. Even its genesis is elusive—the story does not appear under its typescript title anywhere in his composition and submission log. There is an entry for "Death in Venice" (a play on Thomas Mann's novel title and the canals of Venice Beach, California, where the story's action takes place), but this may be a red herring; the only surviving page under this title has nothing to do with the story line.

Nevertheless, the story was complete by early January 1944. Leigh Brackett read it during one of their Sunday sessions at Santa Monica Beach, and she noted its developmental weakness in a January 5 note: "Sorry to be depressing about Where Everything Ends. . . . [I]f you gave it more length, let me meet the murderer and have several suspects to choose from, and built up your premise more fully and soundly, it would be better. You can't, as a rule, be even a little bit vague with mystery yarns." Bradbury may have made some revisions before sending it to Julius Schwartz in early March 1944 for circulation; the story was soon under review by Alden Norton, editorial director of the Popular Publication syndicate's stable of detective magazines.

On March 18, Schwartz reported that Norton was still "wavering between acceptance and rejection." A week later Norton rejected it, conceding that it was well written but objecting to the vagueness of the plot. The actual crime story was a bit vague; Bradbury had left the basic plot in the background—a private eye tracking down his partner's murderer, a silent killer who is trying to take over the small oil fields in and around the fading beachfront resort town of Venice Beach. Bradbury focused instead on the eerie methods of the killer, an excellent swimmer who uses the Venice Beach canal system to stalk and wait for his victims. The private eye finally drowns him, and takes revenge by shoving his body into one of the circus wagon cages at the bottom of one of the canals.

This was not the first time that Norton had been fascinated by a Bradbury crime tale, and he expressed his dilemma to Schwartz with conviction: "As I've told you many times, if this Bradbury guy can combine undeniable talent for good writing with a few plots that can really hang together he will be outstandingly good." Norton's subordinate editors, Mike Tilden of *Detective Tales* and *Dime Mystery*, and Ryerson Johnson of *New Detective*, had already accepted Bradbury stories for their magazines. Eventually, Norton would accept a Bradbury tale for his own Popular Publications magazine, *Flynn's Detective Fiction*, but "Where Everything Ends" had no future with the Popular pulps. Schwartz appears to have offered the story to the venerable *Black Mask* crime magazine, which was now in the Popular stable, but nothing came of this. Bradbury's typescript, with its Julius Schwartz agency cover, was eventually returned to the author and remained inactive for the next sixty years.

Bradbury knew the story's locale intimately; he had lived in Venice first with his parents (1942–47) and, after his marriage, in a rented beach bungalow (1947–50). The tale surfaced again as a starting point when he gradually developed his first detective novel concept in the 1970s and early 1980s. In fact, the outré methods of Bradbury's canal-swimming murderer provided the inspiration for Bradbury's 1985 novel *Death Is a Lonely Business*; the opening passages of the original story are closely tied to the opening of the new novel, the first of three novels featuring a protagonist modeled in part on his own life as a young writer in the downtown neighborhoods around Temple and Figueroa.

Over time, "Where Everything Ends" became perhaps the best known of Bradbury's unpublished early stories, and by 2010 Subterranean Press publisher Bill Shafer arranged to publish it as the title piece in an omnibus volume of Bradbury's detective novels (designated *WEE*). Bradbury's 1944 typescript was lost sometime after the late 1970s, but not before a record photocopy (TS) was made for the Albright Collection. This photocopy became the setting copy for *WEE*, which introduced a few minor compositional errors as the text was styled and corrected.

Copy-text for the present edition is TS, our only image of the lost circulating typescript of 1944. Although Bradbury did not oversee the publication of *WEE*, corrections that the author would have expected his editors to make are emended from that volume; however, *WEE*'s house styling and other editorial impositions are rejected. A few corrections to other obvious errors are emended on the authority of the present editors; decisions to emend or not emend any potentially confusing or problematic points in TS are discussed in textual notes.

In spite of the story's uneven development as a detective yarn, Bradbury's subjective presentation of the protagonist's final underwater odyssey is powerful. His fascination with underwater imagery and the challenges of conveying

underwater reveries surfaced periodically during his first decade as a professional writer, including "Undersea Guardians" (published 1944), "Dead Men Rise Up Never" (1945), "The Cistern" (1947), "The Women" (1948), "The Fog Horn" ("The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms," 1951), and the novella he co-authored with Leigh Brackett, "Lorelei of the Red Mist" (1946).

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); Schwartz to Bradbury, Mar. 18, Mar. 25, and Apr. 1, 1944; Leigh Brackett to Bradbury, postcard, n.d. (postmarked Jan. 5, 1944); Eller and Touponce, 318–21.

—JE

Textual Notes

199.1–11 In . . . cages.] This opening alludes to the early twentieth century prosperity of the Venice Beach community. Forty years later, for his 1985 novel *Death Is a Lonely Business*, Bradbury rewrote and refocused this passage on a description of the decaying reality he had seen in Venice during the early 1940s: "Venice, California, in the old days had much to recommend it to people who liked to be sad. It had fog almost every night and along the shore the moaning of the oil well machinery and the slap of dark water in the canals and the hiss of sand against the windows of your house when the wind came up and sang among the open places and along the empty walks. ¶ Those were the days when the Venice pier was falling apart and dying in the sea and you could find there the bones of a vast dinosaur, the rollercoaster, being covered by the shifting tides. ¶ At the end of one long canal you could find old circus wagons that had been rolled and dumped, and in the cages, at midnight, if you looked, things lived—fish and crayfish moving with the tide; and it was all the circuses of time somehow gone to doom and rusting away."

202.8 Soons] Black's rapid-fire dialog is full of eccentricities, including the unpunctuated contraction here and the exclamation punctuated as an interrogative at 202.36 ("Hell, no?"). These elements are consistent with the character's eccentric speech patterns, and are retained.

230.16 eh? couldn't you?"] Black's agitated dialog is filled with pauses and interjections; Capitalization of "couldn't" would only slow the intended pace of the dialog in a way that runs against Bradbury's apparent intention. Black's "eh?" is clearly internal to the spoken sentence, and is retained.

203.23–31 There's . . . cover up . . .] This last line of dialog between Steve Michaels and Black opens leaf 9 of the TS; it leads into a brief introspective paragraph that ends ten lines into leaf 9 with ellipsis points. No further text follows, indicating that leaf 9 represents a condensed revision inserted as a bridge between leaves 8 and 10. The original leaf 9 and its longer narrative remain unlocated.

205.3–40 "Charlie's funeral . . . canal.] Bradbury appears to have replaced the original leaf 12 with a page and a half of revised and expanded the text (leaves 12 and 12–B). The transitions are smooth, but the paragraph break at the beginning of leaf 12 and the fact that 12–B ends halfway down the page suggest that Bradbury expanded the protagonist's breakthrough realization about the murderer's use of the canal to stalk and approach his victims.

207.26–34 There . . . on.] Steve's discovery of the canal's man-size storm drain lines, and his speculation that the murderer uses these partially submerged culverts as resting and observation points while stalking his victims, appears to be a late addition to the text, inserted on a half-page of text after leaf 15 and numbered 15-B.

Emendations

199.*[title]*Where Everything Ends] CE; WHERE EVERYTHING ENDS | by | Ray Bradbury TS; *om. WEE*

199.18 His] *WEE*; He TS

203.40(2) here] *WEE*; her TS

205.27 pieces] CE; piece TS

206.2 pile] *WEE*; piles TS

208.36 time.] CE; time.. TS

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

199.1 ¶ In] TS; In *WEE*

◊199.18 He] TS; His *WEE*

199.25 "Allright,"] TS; "All right," *WEE*

200.33–36 wind." ¶ | ¶ Four] TS; wind." ¶ Four *WEE*

201.33 dingus."] TS; dingas." *WEE*

201.40 there on the roof.] TS; there the roof. *WEE*

202.40 propped] TS; prepped *WEE*

◊203.40(2) her] TS; here *WEE*

204.18–19 ricocheted] TS; richooheted *WEE*

◊206.2 piles] TS; pile *WEE*

207.26 wall.] TS; well. *WEE*

209.7 against] TS; again *WEE*

209.28 Big Irish] TS; big Irish *WEE*

210.20 allright."] TS; all right." *WEE*

210.32 Rusted] TS; Busted *WEE*

Line-End Hyphenation

205.21 ape-/man] ape-man

21. Bang! You're Dead! (February 1944)

Bradbury wrote, on average, three stories a month throughout 1943, but his composition and submission log shows no stories completed for January 1944. His first tale of the year, a 4,000-word first draft titled "Bang, You're Dead," has a February 1944 entry without a specific date, but with a typed note ("SOLD") entered later between the month and the word count. His sales record includes an entry for July 7, 1944, documenting a $36.00 post-commission payment from *Weird Tales*. As in the composition log, the title of the sales record entry does not include either of the two exclamation points found in the title of the published story. Nolan's list of stories sold by Julius Schwartz includes an actual sale date of July 1, 1944, and a pre-commission payment of $40.00 at *Weird*'s usual penny-a-word rate. Bradbury's expanded sales-by-publisher index includes the post-commission $36.00 payment and the publication date.

"Bang! You're Dead!" was a sequel to "The Ducker" (selection 3), which had appeared in the November 1943 issue of *Weird Tales*. The new story continued the saga of Johnny Choir, a simple farm boy who still believes that real combat is really just a continuation of child-play. By mid-April 1944, *Weird*'s subeditor Monty Buchanan had assigned it to the September issue, thus extending Bradbury's streak of consecutive bimonthly appearances to a full year. "Bang! You're Dead!" became Bradbury's tenth story to appear in the magazine; it was first printed in the September 1944 issue of *Weird Tales* (designated S1), with a title illustration by A. R. Tilburne. The tale was reset and reprinted without illustration in the January 1945 Canadian issue (S2). No further serial publication followed, although Bradbury made (or oversaw) a subsequent typescript; collation indicates that it was prepared directly from S1. In 1976, during the interval between brief revivals of the magazine by Sam Moskowitz and Lin Carter, the S1 text was anthologized in facsimile format for Peter Haining's British anthology, *Weird Tales* (U.S. edition, 1990).

There is no record of further circulation; Bradbury did not include "Bang! You're Dead!" in *Dark Carnival* (1947), essentially a showcase of his *Weird Tales* pieces, or in any of his subsequent story collections. In 2001, however, he allowed the Gauntlet limited edition of *Dark Carnival* (*DC*^{2001}) to include "Bang! You're Dead!" along with three other *Weird Tales* stories that he had not included in the first edition of *Dark Carnival*. Bradbury did not interact with the preparation of S2 or *DC*^{2001}, but a few necessary corrections introduced in those publications are emended into S1, which stands as copy-text for the present edition.

"Bang! You're Dead!" continued the North African combat adventures of Johnny Choir presented in "The Ducker" by moving Johnny into the fierce fighting of the Italian campaign during the summer and fall of 1943. Bradbury's friend

and mentor Henry Kuttner found these stories unconvincing and labored; NBC Radio's promotional writer Jack Snow (better known for his continuation of L. Frank Baum's Oz books) convinced network executives to adapt both of the Johnny Choir stories for the juvenile radio show *Adventure Ahead*, but the series was cancelled before negotiations were finalized. It was as close as either of these two stories would ever get to a second life beyond the pulps. "A Piece of Wood" (1952) and "Bullet With a Name" (1953) represent Bradbury's only other stories with contemporary military settings.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's sales-by-publisher index (c. 1950); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Schwartz to Bradbury, Apr. 15 and July 4, 1944; Jack Snow to Bradbury, Jan. 3, 1944 (misdated 1943), Mar. 26, Aug. 10, Sept. 6, Nov. 10, 1944; Kuttner to Bradbury, July 8, 1944; Tymn and Ashley, 727–36 (Weinberg); Eller, *Becoming Ray Bradbury*, 140.

—JE

Textual Notes

215.9 blood was only something like catsup] S1's editorial teaser (printed beneath A. R. Tilburne's title illustration) keys off of this phrase, and also alludes to Bradbury's prequel, "The Ducker" (selection 3), which had appeared in the November 1943 issue of *Weird Tales*: "Wounds were fake, men lying there were playing, blood was only something like catsup—you didn't get caught if you could duck like Johnny Choir."

216.41 everybody!] Smith's highly-emotional thought is really a panicked exclamation rather than a rhetorical question; Bradbury's punctuation is retained.

Emendations

211.17 "Lie] CE; ^Lie S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

211.11 shell approached.] S1; shell exploded. S2

211.23 St. Vitus—] S1; Saint Vitus— S2

212.3 "I'll duck,"] S1; "I duck," S2

213.5 serious.] S1; seriously. S2

214.3 waking up, rubbing] S1; waking, rubbing TS

214.20 of the Earth.] S1; of Earth. TS

216.20 a good deal] S1; *om.* S2

216.32–33 Crissake,] S1; Chrissake, S2

216.33–36 bolt!" ¶ | ¶ THEY] S1; bolt!" ¶ They TS

217.6 it got out] S1; it came out TS

217.20 Teach me, Johnny.] S1; *om.* TS
217.28 field,] S1; fields, S2
217.34 You'll] S1; You will S2
218.20–21 triumph. ¶ Then] S1; triumph. Then S2
218.32 metal pain.] S1; mental pain. S2
218.38 mask] S1; mast TS

Line-End Hyphenation

211.19 earth-/wormwise] earth-wormwise
214.2 lock-/jaw] lockjaw

22. Enter—the Douser (Half-Pint Homicide) (February 1944)

Bradbury's third appearance in Mike Tilden's *Detective Tales* magazine emerged from the sequence of six new crime stories he composed between December 1943 and mid-March 1944. His composition and submission log establishes a February completion (without a specific date) for a 5,000-word draft under the working title "Enter—The Douser"; a parenthetical typed note ("SOLD!") appears after the title entry. His sales record shows a May 1, 1944, payment from *Detective Tales* and a post-commission amount of $34.20; here the working title is slightly modified to "Enter the Douser." Nolan's listing of sales by Julius Schwartz carries the actual sale date of April 28 and the pre-commission price of $38.00 under the same title. Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index does not include a page for sales to the Popular Publications crime magazines.

Bradbury rewrote and resubmitted the story to Schwartz in the final days of March 1944. By the end of April, Mike Tilden had purchased it, under the original working title "Enter—The Douser," for *Detective Tales*. Alden Norton, editorial director for the Popular Publications pulps, was evaluating another Bradbury crime story for *Flynn's Detective Fiction* ("Yesterday I Lived!"), but generally deferred to Tilden (*Detective Tales* and *Dime Mystery*) and Ryerson Johnson (*New Detective*) to offer on Bradbury stories for the magazines they edited for him. But these editors often imposed new titles on Bradbury's tales, and "Enter—The Douser" was no exception. It appeared in the November 1944 issue of *Detective Tales* under the title "Half-Pint Homicide" (designated S1), with an uncredited opening illustration. Bradbury would soon move beyond this phase of his career in the crime genre magazines, and never offered "Half-Pint Homicide" to anthology editors or included it in his book-length collections.

Eventually it became clear that Bradbury did not control the rights to many of these crime stories; Julius Schwartz had not limited the initial detective magazine sales to first serial rights, and subsequent holders of these rights in-

cluded "Half-Pint Homicide," along with most of the Popular Publications stories, in the 1984 Dell collection *A Memory of Murder* (*MeM*). Bradbury limited this unwelcome collection to a single mass-market paperback printing and recovered his rights, insuring that they would not reach print again. Copy-text is S1, which represents the earliest known form of Bradbury's initial intention for serial publication. Corrections by *MeM*'s editors of obvious errors are emended into the copy-text, but all of Dell's house styling is rejected.

This was the first of four stories written around the character of "Douser" Mulligan, an unconventional private eye whose annoying chatter and pip-squeak bravado provokes and distracts criminals; eventually the Douser, a parody of the Raymond Chandler detective, would use his ability to track (or douse for) criminal action to goad a crime boss into a fatal mistake. The occasionally entertaining but often superficial adventures of the Douser continued in the December 1944 issue of *Detective Tales* with "Four-Way Funeral"; "Long Live the Douser," along with an unfinished Douser fragment, dated from the summer of 1944, but these final two tales never reached print.

The S1 title change carried over into *MeM*, but given the copyright situation, Bradbury had no say in this matter. His original title, punctuated as it appears in Bradbury's composition and submission log and in Schwartz's April 29, 1944 sales notification letter to Bradbury, is emended into the title line; S1's editorially-imposed publication title is retained in parenthesis as a subtitle for the present edition so that the bibliographical history of the story is not obscured. Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Schwartz to Bradbury, Apr. 1 and 29, 1944; Eller and Touponce, 317–18; Mogen, 150.

—JE

Textual Notes

221.19 jail] Bradbury's use of "jail" is lowercase throughout rest of S1, except in the proper noun "Central Jail" at 221.16.

222.27 sarge—"] *MeM*'s editors capitalized "Sarge" in direct address at three points (here and at 228.31, 228.34). Bradbury's preference for all sixteen references, direct or indirect, is to lower-case the title; this preference is retained throughout the story.

223.36 bounced like a ping-pong on the windshield.] The *MeM* variant reading ("bounced off the windshield like a ball.") may or may not have been authorial, but it is part of a completely different intention for the story: in the copy-text reading, Bradbury used the Parker Brother's trademark term (distinct from the actual sport of table tennis) to form his metaphor. The celluloid "ball" is clearly implied, and there is no need for emendation.

226.27 happened."] Douser's repeated question carries an intentionally demanding tone rather than an interrogative one. This intention, as well as the copy-text reading, is retained.

226.35 everyday.] Bradbury shows no consistency between the single-word adverb or the two-word adverbial phrase form in stories from this period; the copy-text reading is clear in context, and is retained.

228.7 vanishing forever . . . .] In S1, this paragraph and the next are separated by six stars; no other section breaks carry such ornaments, suggesting either an internal section break or a compositor's insertion to adjust spacing. These stars are silently regularized to the three-dot configuration used in the present edition to indicate section breaks in the copy-text.

228.17–18 lips, ¶ "Schabold] Here and at 227.22–23 (said, ¶ "Oh,), it's likely that the lightly styled S1 has retained Bradbury's occasional pattern of separating dialog from the framing narrative by means of a paragraph break. In this case a full stop would be more appropriate than the copy-text's comma, but Bradbury's original reading is not confusing and is retained.

Emendations

221.*[title]* Enter—the Douser (Half-Pint Homicide)] CE; Half-Pint Homicide | By Ray Bradbury S1

*221.19 jail] *MeM*; Jail S1

226.13 I'll] *MeM*; I'l S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

221.15 who just] S1; who had just *MeM*

*◊221.19 Jail] S1; jail *MeM*

221.24 of jail] S1; of the jail *MeM*

*222.27 sarge—"] S1; Sarge—" *MeM Also* 228.31, 228.34

*223.36 bounced like a ping-pong on the windshield.] S1; bounced off the windshield like a ball. *MeM*

225.12 saint.] S1; saint's. *MeM*

226.28 "1929."] S1; "Nineteen twenty-nine." *MeM*

226.30 1929] S1; Nineteen twenty-nine *MeM*

*226.35 everyday.] S1; every day. *MeM*

227.22–23 said, ¶ "Oh,] S1; said, "Oh. *MeM*

228.7–9 forever. . . . ¶ * * * ¶ They] S1; forever . . . ¶ They *MeM*

Line-End Hyphenation

223.9 tie-/lines] tie-lines

223.40 waste-/basket] wastebasket

23. Rocket Skin (February 1944)

Between the summer of 1943 and the summer of 1944, Bradbury composed only two science fiction stories: "Lazarus Come Forth" (selection 16) and "Rocket Skin." Neither was remarkable, and "Rocket Skin" in particular proved very difficult to craft, requiring two rounds of submission during the spring of 1944. Bradbury's composition and submission log contains a nearly obliterated entry for the story, marked out with typed overstrikes and deep ink strokes. It was the third and final of his February 1944 story entries; like the other two, it does not appear to include a specific date. A May 23rd entry for a rewritten 5,000-word resubmission includes a subsequent typed note ("SOLD!") between the date and word count columns. Bradbury's sales record shows a June 12, 1944, pay date from *Thrilling Wonder Stories* and a $45.00 post-commission payment. Nolan's listing of stories sold by Julius Schwartz contains the actual sale date of June 9th and the $50.00 pre-commission payment. Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index includes the post-commission payment and the record of first publication in the spring 1946 issue of *Thrilling Wonder Stories* (S1) with a title illustration by Mark Marchioni. It was never reprinted in magazines or anthologized. Like most of the science fiction stories from his intermediate phase of development, Bradbury did not include "Rocket Skin" in any of his collections.

Bradbury's initial February 1944 submission of "Rocket Skin" originated in a typically strange Bradbury premise: itinerant space travelers hitching rides on the external shells of rockets, in the tradition of railway hobos crossing America. This group of riders even included an evangelizing priest. The first draft prompted a concerned critique from Schwartz on March 11, 1944: "Not too sure about this yarn, having as one of its characters a priest. I don't mind, of course, but for pulp magazine audiences?" All three of his February stories, which included "Bang! You're Dead!" and "Half-Pint Homicide" (selections 22 and 23), exhibited a tendency that concerned Schwartz even more than the rocket-riding priest: "I've noticed a rather alarming trend in your last couple of yarns. You're trying to be so very clever in your opening pages of the story that on the contrary it becomes much too vague and I hardly know what the hell you're talking about. Take it easy, kid. Don't be ashamed to be more simple and direct in telling your yarns."

Schwartz saw enough potential in "Rocket Skin" to send it off to John W. Campbell at *Astounding Science Fiction*; it was a long shot, given Campbell's predictable tendency to reject Bradbury's more fanciful space yarns. After Campbell's late March rejection, Schwartz sent it on to Oscar Friend at *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, who took the time to make suggestions for a major rewrite. Friend found the missionary priest distracting, and felt that the entire story was too pointless, even for pulp fiction: ". . . we think that he let a good idea get away from him." In its initial form, "Rocket Skin" merely offered a fairly superficial

lesson in hobo ethics: the desperate rocket riders had to stick together and protect each other; anyone who shook a man loose from his magnetic anchors on the rocket skin would face a similar fate. Friend suggested adding an undercover police drama that would have the protagonist, already a first-time rocket rider, seeking a criminal hidden among the nameless rocket skin hoboes.

In revision, Bradbury refocused the tale on an espionage mystery: Earth's enemies are using rocket riders to courier stolen weapon secrets between planets, and the protagonist must discover which one of his fellow riders unknowingly carries the secrets in a subconscious memory plant. Bradbury subordinated the priestly element, making him one of an order of "space philosophers" who give comfort and spiritual insight to the homeless riders. Bradbury sent the rewritten version back to Schwartz on (or just after) May 27, and from there it went immediately back to *Thrilling Wonder Stories*. Friend's early June 1944 purchase was promising, but *Thrilling Wonder*'s transition from bimonthly to quarterly issues the previous summer had created a backlog of material. Quarterly publication continued through most of 1946; as a result, "Rocket Skin" did not reach print until the spring 1946 issue.

No pages are known to survive from Bradbury's initial February-March 1944 submission. A single opening typescript leaf (TS) survives in the Albright Collection; it appears to be a very late discard from the final typescript of his May 1944 resubmission, and contains a few brief passages that he lightly revised one last time before sending the final version on to Schwartz. The page is dated May 27, 1944, and may represent (along with dated opening pages from other stories of this period) Bradbury's method of verifying authorship of his circulating typescripts. In the absence of the final submitted typescript, the TS fragment serves as copy-text for the opening paragraphs of "Rocket Skin"; TS is the sole exemplar of Bradbury's mature and unmediated hand for the first 200 words, and it preserves his styling and punctuation preferences for this opening passage. Collation provides strong circumstantial evidence that his final opening revisions are represented in the published stage, and these substantives are emended into the copy-text. S1 serves as copy-text for the rest of the story (beginning with "His gun holster"). With no further published or unpublished forms of the text to serve as sources of emendation, the present edition emends only to correct obvious errors in the S1 portion of the copy-text.

By the time that "Rocket Skin" reached print, Bradbury was beginning to write more sophisticated science fiction that centered on people and issues rather than fabricated interplanetary scenarios. "Rocket Skin" would be one of the last of Bradbury's intermediate-quality science fiction to reach the pages of *Thrilling Wonder Stories*. During the war years, Oscar Friend was quite willing to favor the juvenile, highly emotional kind of stories published by his predecessor, Mort Weisinger—the originator of the "Bug-Eyed Monster" tradition

in the stories and covert art of *TWS*. Sam Merwin, Jr., Friend's successor, soon elevated the magazine to postwar prominence among the surviving pre-war pulps, and his tenure would coincide with Bradbury's more masterful return to science fiction in the mid- and late-1940s.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's sales-by-publisher index (c. 1950); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Schwartz to Bradbury, Mar. 11, Apr. 1, and May 6, 1944; Friend (Standard Magazines) to Schwartz, May 4, 1944; Ashley, 187–89; Tymn and Ashley, 754–62 (Ewald and Ashley).

—JE

Textual Notes

229.*[title]* The opening editorial teaser reflects the added dimension of espionage that *Thrilling Wonder*'s Oscar Friend wanted from Bradbury's rewrite, but it has no actual anchor in the text: "Hitch-hiking through space, clamped magnetically to the skin of a rocket ship, George Vanning finds his companions are—espionage, death, and murder!"

230.18 forbidden them,] Bradbury's somewhat dated usage is nonetheless correct, and is retained without emendation of the preposition "to."

230.24 rocket Skins] Throughout the story, Bradbury capitalizes "Skin" to show the near-worshipful regard the hitch-hikers have for the hard metal surface that their lives depend on. All of these direct references to the "Great Skin" are retained unemended.

Emendations

229.[title]* Rocket Skin] CE; ROCKET SKIN | by | r. Bradbury TS; ROCKET SKIN | By RAY BRADBURY S1

229.2–3 Vanning, rushing through cold space.] S1; Vanning, in the cold air, rushing. TS

229.5 armor.] S1; armor, rushing, too. TS

229.7 metal,] S1; metal dugs, TS

229.8 fearfully] S1; wildly. TS

229.9 jet-flame] S1; flame TS

229.14 rocket's acceleration] S1; rocket children struck home and acceleration TS

229.14 quadrupled with] S1; quadrupled in TS

229.16 around.] S1; around the dwindling masses. TS

229.22–23 George Vanning . . . face.] S1; George's eyes slipped wetly^ In a pallid face. His heart shook out a loud rhythm. TS;

230.16 look] CE; looked S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

229.1 forget!] TS; ~. S1

◊229.2–3 Vanning, in the cold air, rushing.] TS; Vanning, rushing through cold space. S1

◊229.5 armor, rushing, too.] TS; armor. S1

◊229.7 metal dugs,] TS; metal, S1

◊229.8 wildly.] TS; fearfully S1

◊229.9 flame] TS; jet-flame S1

◊229.14 rocket children struck home and acceleration] TS; rocket's acceleration S1

◊229.14 quadrupled in] TS; quadrupled with S1

◊229.16 around the dwindling masses.] TS; around. S1

◊229.22–23 George's eyes slipped wetly In a pallid face. His heart shook out a loud rhythm.] TS; George Vanning felt his heart shaking out a loud rhythm. His eyes were wide in a pallid face. S1

24. Forgotten Man (It Burns Me Up!) (March 5, 1944)

Bradbury's winter 1943–44 run of crime fiction tales ran its course with the composition of "Forgotten Man" and "No Phones—Private Coffin." Bradbury's pulp editors eventually retitled both of these stories. As "Yesterday I Lived!" (volume 3, selection 1), "No Phones—Private Coffin" would reach print first, but "Forgotten Man," retitled as "It Burns Me Up!", was written a week earlier. Bradbury's composition and submission log provides a March 5, 1944, completion date for a rather short 3,300-word draft of "Forgotten Man"; a subsequent typed comment ("SOLD!") appears between the date and word count columns. His sales record lists a March 1944 post-commission payment of $36.00 from *Dime Mysteries* under the same working title. Nolan's list of sales by Julius Schwartz establishes the actual sale date of March 24 and the pre-commission price of $40.00. Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index has no page for the crime stories he sold to the Popular Publications magazines.

"Forgotten Man," told from the perspective of a dead man reflecting on the criminal events leading up to the fatal moment, was first published (with an uncredited title illustration) as "It Burns Me Up!" in the November 1944 issue of *Dime Mystery* (S1). It was reset and reprinted with the same title (but without the title illustration) in the December 1944 issue of *Strange Detective Mysteries* (S2), a Canadian crime pulp that, like *Dime Mysteries*, was owned by Popular Publications. Bradbury considered most of his crime tales to be exemplars of a useful but intermediate phase of his development; like most of the others, he

held it out of his subsequent story collections and only allowed one reprinting in a multiple-author genre anthology (*Hauntings and Horrors*, 1969). Eventually, Byron Preiss persuaded Bradbury to allow a graphic adaptation by Harvey Kurtzman and Matt Wagner for *Ray Bradbury Comics* 2 (April 1993).

Julius Schwartz had not limited Bradbury's crime story sales to first serial rights, however, and in the early 1980s subsequent owners of the rights to the stories first published in Popular's mystery and detective magazines went ahead with plans to publish a collection of these stories in the 1984 Dell mass-market paperback collection, *A Memory of Murder* (*MeM*). Bradbury reluctantly participated in preparing this collection so that he could acquire the rights; the stories in *MeM*, including "It Burns Me Up!", were limited to the single paperback printing.

By the spring of 1944, Popular Publications editor Mike Tilden had already bought several Bradbury stories for *Detective Tales* and had others under consideration. On March 25, 1944, Schwartz relayed Tilden's reaction to "Forgotten Man" ("perfectly swell"), along with news that Tilden had purchased it for *Dime Mystery*, another one of the crime magazines he edited (under Alden Norton's direction) for Popular Publications. With this story Tilden moved Bradbury from the penny-a-word rate common to many of the pulps to a cent and a quarter per word. Tilden felt that Bradbury had quickly reached a level of prominence that demanded an editorial feature; in early April 1944 he sent in a 300-word piece, but it never appeared in either of Tilden's magazines at Popular.

Nevertheless, Bradbury continued to impress Popular's editors; after rejecting "Where Everything Ends" (selection 20), directing editor Alden Norton finally bought "No Phones—Private Coffin" and raised Bradbury to the lofty cent-and-a-half per word rate. Bradbury's mentor Henry Kuttner, accomplished (under various names) in a wide range of genres, considered "It Burns Me Up!" to be, along with "The Trunk Lady" (selection 18), one of Bradbury's best stories during his brief three-year run in the crime genre magazines.

Copy-text is S1, the closest surviving form to his unlocated typescript for "Forgotten Man." S2 provides a source for emendation for a few errors in S1. Bradbury reviewed but did not revise the story for *MeM*; the numerous stylings imposed by *MeM*'s editors are rejected. The imposed S1 title change carried over into *MeM*, but given the copyright situation, Bradbury had no say in this matter. His intended title is emended into the title line; S1's editorially-imposed title is retained in parenthesis as a subtitle to avoid obscuring the publication history of this story.

Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's agency listing (c. 1950); Schwartz to Bradbury, Mar. 25, Apr. 1, and 15, and Sept. 9, 1944.

—JE

Textual Notes

241.5 be mad, be disturbed!] In isolation, the S2 variant ("be mad, be perturbed!") appears intentional; however, the context of the surrounding catalogs of emotion ("be perturbed, angry, mad, . . . get perturbed, get mad!") suggests a line-skip reading error by S2's compositor.

241.6 Iris dilate!] *MeM*'s editorial correction from "Iris" to "Pupils" is not essential to reading the passage. Bradbury had read many books on the senses and the sensory organs, and his use of Iris may be deliberate; there is no compelling need for emendation, and the copy-text reading is retained.

243.37 pot-beer] Although Bradbury lightly revised a few of the detective tales included in *MeM*, the substantive variants in this story all appear to be editorial stylings and impositions. The *MeM* variant "bad guy" for "pot-beer" is likely an editor's way of eliminating an archaic term; Bradbury's original reading is retained.

Emendations

241.*[title]* Forgotten Man ("It Burns Me Up!")] CE; "It Burns Me Up!" | By Ray Bradbury S1

243.19–20 hieroglyphics] S2; heirglyphics S1

244.26 divertissement] CE; divertissment S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

*241.5 be mad, be disturbed!] S1; be mad, be pertrubed! S2

*241.6 Iris] S1; Pupils *MeM*

242.19 get?] S1; ~ ! S2

243.1 does he think *he* is?"] S1; does *he* think he is?" S2

243.36 his chin.] S1; this chin. S2

*243.37 pot-beer,] S1; bad guy *MeM*

244.10–11 room. ¶ The] S1; ~ : ~ S2

244.28 this young] S1; his young S2

245.18 *them,*] S1; them, S2

Line-End Hyphenation

242.35 damn-/fool] damn-fool

242.41 "What-/inell] "Whatinell

25. The Jar (March 7, 1944)

Bradbury composed his masterful and enduring terror tale "The Jar" in early March 1944, more than three months after completing his last off-trail weird, "There Was an Old Woman" (selection 17). During the intervening fourteen weeks, his Muse had led him through a half dozen crime stories of varying quality. These stories continued to emerge from his subconscious through mid-March 1944, but his composition and submission log shows that he broke stride and completed a 5,300-word draft of "The Jar" on March 7; his subsequent parenthetical typed note ("SOLD.") appears between the date and the word count columns. His sales record documents a $49.50 post-commission payment from *Weird Tales*, received from his agent Julius Schwartz on September 7, 1944. Nolan's list of sales by Schwartz confirms an actual purchase date of September 1 and a pre-commission payment of $55.00. Bradbury's sales-by-publisher index, prepared around 1950, records the publication date and a misremembered post-commission payment of $40.00. His index-card file entry for "The Jar" identifies several anthology submissions, but it is undated.

"The Jar" made its publication debut in the November 1944 issue of *Weird Tales* (S1) with a title illustration by Boris Dolgov. It was reset and reprinted without the illustration in the July 1945 Canadian issue (S2); since his story "Reunion" (selection 13) was already scheduled for the same Canadian issue, his by-line in S2 was replaced with the house pseudonym Edward Banks. The S1 version was successively reprinted in the November 1958 issue of *Short Stories* (S3), the February 1959 *Cavalier* (S4), the March 1959 issue of *Short Stories* in Britain (S5, printed with the U.S. issue date of November 1958), and the April 1959 issue of the British magazine *Suspense* (S6, abridged).

Successive revisions soon overshadowed the original S1 version and its periodical line of transmission. During the spring of 1946 Bradbury revised the story for the May 1947 release of *Dark Carnival* (*DC*), his first story collection. In 1955, he would make even deeper revisions to "The Jar" as he refashioned many of his *DC* stories for *The October Country* (*OC*). The *OC* revisions of 1955 have continued through the long history of *OC* editions in America and Great Britain. As with "The Man Upstairs" (selection 12) and "There Was an Old Woman" (selection 17), Bradbury carried the *OC* revisions into his 1980 retrospective 100-story collection *The Stories of Ray Bradbury* (*SRB*) and its British counterparts, *SRB*^{1983} and *Ray Bradbury Stories*, volume 1 (*RBS1*). The 2001 Gauntlet limited press edition of *DC*, based on the American *DC* text, did not involve the author.

This popular Bradbury weird has a further cultural history extending, at times, beyond Bradbury's direct control. The S1 version of "The Jar" was considered, but not printed, in *The Saint's Choice* anthology (1945); it was anthol-

ogized in *The Sleeping and the Dead* (1947; U.K., 1963), *Fear and Trembling* (1948), *Suddenly* (1965), Dr. Caligari's *Black Book* (U.K., 1968), and *Getting Even* (1978). The story was adapted by James Bridges for television and broadcast on the *Alfred Hitchcock Hour* (CBS) on February 14, 1964, earning Bridges an Emmy nomination. It was adapted yet again for the later series of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (USA Network) and broadcast April 6, 1986. Bradbury himself subsequently adapted "The Jar" for the final season of *The Ray Bradbury Theater* (USA); it was broadcast on January 17, 1992.

The original S1 publication date was affected by the impressive backlog of Bradbury stories already purchased by *Weird Tales* editors before early April 1944, when Monty Buchanan took up "The Jar" for editorial review. There was really no hurry, as Buchanan already had three Bradbury stories—"The Lake" (volume 1, selection 15), "There Was an Old Woman" (selection 17), and "Bang! You're Dead!" (selection 21) already set for the May, July, and September issues. Nevertheless, by April 15, Schwartz could report that "things look good" for "The Jar." The September 1944 purchase of "The Jar" helped at least one of his more off-trail offerings to the magazine; the strong traditional appeal of "The Jar" carried the effusive light fantasy of a new July 1944 composition, "The Poems" (volume 3), to acceptance at *Weird Tales*, but not before Bradbury was warned to drop what Schwartz called the "arty" type of story and return to "good old weird-horror yarns." "The Jar" combined just this kind of weird horror with richly descriptive and unexpected Bradbury twists, and the significant revisions for *DC* and *OC* refined the tale without changing any of the details.

The title image of "The Jar" was inspired by a 1934 encounter with a carnival exhibit on the Santa Monica Pier. Bradbury, not quite fourteen years old, had just moved to Los Angeles with his family, and the mysterious jars of biological specimens fascinated him. S1, which reflects Bradbury's earliest settled intention for periodical publication, stands as copy-text. The S2–S5 and the *DC*–*OC* lines of descent serve as sources of emendation for necessary corrections of error (S6, which is both abridged and heavily edited for content, is not an authorial form). But Bradbury's heavy revisions for *DC* and *OC* represent later intentions for story collection development, showcasing a kind of story he no longer wrote; this rich record of revision appears instead within the list of post-copy-text substantives presented below. For clarity of presentation, the sigla for the *OC* line of descent ($OC^{1960\text{–}1999}$, *SRB*, SRB^{1983}, and *RBS1*) will appear in the historical collation only where there is further variation from *OC*. Sources: Author's composition and submission log (1942–45); author's sales record (1941–49); author's sales-by-publisher index (c. 1950); author's agency listing (c. 1950); author's index-card file; Schwartz to Bradbury, Apr. 15, Sept. 2 and 9, 1944; Tymn and Ashley, 727–36 (Weinberg).

—JE

Textual Notes

249.22 irritated] There's no way to know if Bradbury or Arkham House publisher/editor August Derleth caught the extra comma at this point in proofing the *DC* text, but deletion of S1's comma (by emendation) is necessary for the sentence to make sense.

250.22 grey] Bradbury's period preference spelling "grey" is apparent through the S1 house styling, except for the first two instances (250.22 and 250.24), both of which are emended from the British *DC* to reflect his preferred spelling.

253.42 sleep . . .”] The original paragraph ends with two ellipsis points; context indicates that Bradbury's intention was not a full stop, but rather an open ellipsis at the end of the spoken words; consequently, a third ellipsis point is emended into the copy-text.

258.8 paper mache] Bradbury's carefully crafted dialect suggests that Thedy's unsophisticated use of this Americanized French term (generally spelled "papier maché") carry through in the reading text as well.

258.21 “Whyncha leave alone?] It's not clear from context whether the *DC* reading ("Whyncha leave me alone?) is editorial or authorial. The variant is not required to convey the meaning, and it may even change the meaning in ways that Bradbury did not intend; the S1 reading is therefore retained.

259.18 thought, hope,] This necessary correction first appears in Bradbury's *DC* revisions, and carries on into *OC*; S5's variation ("through hope") compounds the original error, and is almost certainly editorial.

Emendations

249.*[title]* THE JAR] *DC*; The Jar | By RAY BRADBURY] S1; The Jar | By EDWARD BANKS S2

*249.22 irritated] *DC*; ~ , S1

249.26 carney-boss'] *DC*; carney^boss' S1

*250.22 grey] *DC*[1948]; gray S1 *Also* 250.24

252.36 humming] *DC*; hummings S1

*253.42 sleep . . .”] CE; sleep . .” S1

255.7 “Ten] S5; ^~ S1

257.34 bear] *DC*; bare S1

258.39 camaraderie] *DC*; comraderie S1

259.5 “Thedy,] S3; “They S1

*259.18 thought, hope,] *DC*; though hope, S1

260.10 brain!”] *DC*; grain!” S1

260.19 tamping] S5; tampering S1

Historical Collation: Post-Copy-Text Substantives

◊249.*[title]* The Jar | By RAY BRADBURY] S1; The Jar | By EDWARD BANKS S2
249.4 you. It] S1; you. ¶ It S5
249.14 queues.] S1; queus. S2
249.15 leaving Louisiana] S1; leaving the Louisiana S3, S5
249.15 stars peppering it.] S1; stars. *OC*
249.17–18 showing, eyes puzzled,] S1; showing; his eyes were puzzled *OC*
249.19 trotted] S1; walked *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
249.19 giant] S1; gaunt *OC*
249.20 "Oh,"] S1; ¶ "Oh," S3, S5
*249.22 Charlie, irritated, his thoughts were touched.] S1; irritated because his thoughts had been touched. S3, S5; Charlie, like a man in his sleep. *OC*
249.23 The carny-boss appreciated Charlie's curiosity.] S1; The carny-boss's eyes dilated, Charlie's curiosity. S5
◊249.26 carny boss'] S1; carny-boss's S3, S5, *DC*[1948], *OC*
249.28 Charlie made] S1; Charlie's vocal chords made S3, S5
249.28 "Oh."] S1; "oh." *OC*
250.1–2 estimated, squinting eyes, counting on fingers,] S1; estimated, counting fingers, *OC*
250.7 the thing] S1; the damn thing *DC*, *DC*[1948]
250.10 looked up to] S1; looked-up-to *OC*
250.11 guys] S1; folks *OC*
250.15 it saw it,] S1; he saw the jar, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
250.17 the thing around] S1; ◆ the [that *OC*] damn thing around, anyway. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
250.18 —don't mind me, I'm just a big-mouth.] S1; —but, ◆ don't mind me [hell *OC*] I'm a big-mouthed so-and-so. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
250.20–21 The brass merry-go-round clanking faded.] S1; *om. OC*
250.22 its] S1; his *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
*◊250.22 gray] S1; grey S5, *DC*[1948]
250.24 gray] S1; grey S5, *DC*[1948]
250.26 nothing, nothing, nothing.] S1; nothing, *nothing*. nothing. S3, S5; nothing, nothing. *OC*
250.28–29 excited. . . . *Yes sir*!] S1; excited. *Yes sir*! he thought to himself, *Yes, sir*! *OC*
250.33 numerous] S1; slumberous S3
250.34 chanting] S1; murmuring *OC*
250.34 on General] S1; on the General S3, S5
250.35 vehicle] S1; wagon *OC*
250.36–38 nicotine . . . summer night.] S1; nicotine glow-worms, their voices were frog mutterings ◆ in [on *OC*] summer nights. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

250.39 leaned at an eager angle.] S1; leaned down at an eager angle. *DC*, *DC*[1948]; leaned down eagerly. *OC*
251.4 room in the] S1; room, then in the *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
251.5 niche, showing] S1; niche shining *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
251.5 his dark.] S1; the dark. S3, *OC*
251.8 ta see, you dumb sheebaw!"] S1; to see, baby-doll." *OC*
251.9 fist . . . fringe:] S1; fist and looked at it. *OC*
251.9 fringe:] S1; fringle. S3, S5
251.10 "Looks kine . . . wolf,] S1; "looks like a brain, kine like a pickled wolf, S3, S5
251.10 pickled wolf,] S1; pickled jellyfish, *OC*
251.10–11 —well . . . yourself!"] S1; —well, come see yourself!" *OC*
251.12 Somebody snicked their] S1; Someone snicked a *OC*
251.14 this—"] S1; this—?" *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
251.15 night.] S1; evening. *OC*
251.16–17 to keep . . . other,] S1; to keep one shoe before the other, S5; to put one shoe before the other. *OC*
251.18 Charlie, first] S1; Charlie for the first
251.18–19 seized . . . clatter:] S1; seized some hidden strategy and crashed the glass lid shut. *OC*
251.20 around to my house.] S1; aroun' my house! *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
251.23 thet again,"] S1; that again!" *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
251.23 brain?"] S1; octopus?" *OC*
251.24 reins and the] S1; reins; the *OC*
251.25 around!] S1; aroun'! *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
251.27 off] S1; off'n *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
251.28–29 They stood . . . after.] S1; The men stood, all of them, chewing their tongues, squinting up the road in the dark. *OC*
251.33 AS CHARLIE] S1; Charlie *OC*
251.33–38 shack, carrying . . . swamp-rim.] S1; shack and carried the jar to its throne in the living room, thinking that from now on his lean-to would be a palace, with an "emperor"—that was the word! "emperor"—all cold and white and quiet drifting in his private pool, raised, elevated upon a shelf over a ramshackle table. ¶ The jar, as he watched, burnt off the cold mist that hung over this place in the rim of the swamp. *OC*
251.36 the table.] S1; the skinny table. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
251.37 gray sameness] S1; grey sameness *DC*[1948]
251.39 "What've] S1; "What *OC*
251.40 his admiration.] S1; his awe. *OC*
252.3 "What does it] S1; "What's it *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
252.4–5 hips. Her eyes were intent] S1; hips, her eyes intent *OC*
252.5 lips drawing] S1; lips drawn *OC*
252.5 show] S1; *om.* S5

252.7 jar, and swept around quickly] S1; jar, once more at Charlie, then back to the jar, once more at Charlie, once more to the jar, then she whirled quickly to catch the wall. *DC*, *DC*[1948]

252.7–8 jar, and . . . hoarsely.] S1; jar, once more at Charlie, once more at the jar, then whirled quickly. ¶ "It—it looks—looks just like *you*, Charlie!" she cried. *OC*

252.7–8 "It—it looks just like—YOU—] S1; "It—it looks. It—looks just like—*you*— *DC*, *DC*[1948]

252.9 The door . . . her!] S1; The bedroom door slammed behind her. *DC*, *DC*[1948]; The bedroom door slammed. *OC*

252.11–12 after her, . . . the jar:] S1; after his wife, heart pounding frantically. Much later, when his heart slowed, he talked to the thing in the jar. *OC*

252.13 work] S1; worked S5

252.13 bottom-land . . . year,] S1; bottom land to the butt-bone every year, *OC*

252.13–14 takes the money and rushes] S1; grabs the money and runs *OC*

252.15 holt] S1; hold *OC*

252.15 She and . . . make] S1; Her and the men from the store, they make *OC*

252.15–16 if I'm not whip-smart."] S1; if I don't know the ways to hold or touch or work her. Damn, but I *try!*" *DC*, *DC*[1948]; if I don't know a way to hold onto her! Damn, but I *try!*" *OC*

252.19 the door.] S1; the frontyard door. *DC*, *DC*[1948]; the front-yard door. *OC*

252.22 we—that is—we] S1; we—we *OC*

252.30 creaking across it,] S1; creaking the boards, *OC*

252.31 as a hairy] S1; as hairy S5

252.32 arm wiped . . . mouth:] S1; wrist wiped clean the questioning mouth: *DC*, *DC*[1948]; wrist wiped a mouth clean: *OC*

252.34 Charlie'd] S1; Charlie would S5

◊252.36 hummings,] S1; humming *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

252.37 goiters] S1; goitres *DC*[1948]

252.37 belching] S1; shouting *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

252.39 nothing.] S1; anything. S5, *OC*

253.1 brain] S1; brains *DC*, *DC*[1948], S5, *OC*

253.3 was kind of a rude] S1; was a kind of rude S5

253.5 That would've been irreverent.] S1; That would have been irreverent. S5; *om. OC*

253.6–7 room—letting eyes] S1; room—letting their eyes *OC*

253.9 awhile] S1; a while S2, S5, *DC*[1948], *OC*

253.11 some one] S1; someone S2, S5, *DC*, *DC*[1948]

253.15 quilt] S1; pillow *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

253.16 looked-up-toedness] S1; looked-up-toness *DC*[1948]; looked-up-to-ness *OC*

253.18 women folks] S1; women-folk *DC*[1948]

253.18–19 women folks . . . menfolk.] S1; womenfolk in a bunch, all gray and quiet, abiding their men. *OC*
253.21 set at the feet of Charlie] S1; sit at the feet of Charlie, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
253.22 at this here Holy] S1; at the Holy S5
253.22 set as seven-day concrete] S1; set cold and hard *OC*
253.23 nobody.] S1; anybody. *OC*
253.25 Creek] S1; Crick *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
253.25 from his . . . cavern,] S1; from a deep cave somewhere inside himself, *OC*
253.26 there'd] S1; there would S3, S5
253.29 People settled . . . rain.] S1; People settled ◆ like sows in the warm [as sows in warm *DC*[1948]] mud after a rain. *OC*
253.30–32 ¶ | ¶ GRAMPS] S1; ¶ Gramps *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
253.33 high . . . tenor:] S1; high, thin, old-man's tenor" *OC*
253.34 what *it*] S1; what it *OC*
253.34–35 Sometimes] S1; Some times *DC*, *DC*[1948]
253.35–36 setting here] S1; settin' here *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
253.37 think of it . . ."] S1; think on it . . ." *OC*
253.38–39 Everybody] S1; Every body *DC*, *DC*[1948]
253.40 May be a] S1; Maybe it's a S3, S5; Maybe a *DC*[1948], *OC*
254.1 enough from him,] S1 enough for him, S3, S5
254.3 Willows Road,] S1; Willow Sump, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
254.5 gawk, we] S1; kid. We *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
254.6 litter . . . around] S1; litter any time she jumped around *OC*
254.7–8 we usually gave] S1; we give *OC*
254.10 "—So] S1; "^So *OC*
254.10 gallon] S1; two-gallon *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
254.10–11 filling . . . brim with] S1; fillin' it to the brim with *DC*, *DC*[1948]; fillin' it to the top with *OC*
254.11 It slopped in the sunlight.] S1; *om.* *OC*
254.12 running around,] S1; runnin' 'round *DC*, *DC*[1948]; runnin' around, *OC*
254.12 small,] S1; *om.* S5
254.13 snugly. Just beginning] S1; snuggly. Just beginnin' *DC*, *DC*[1948]; funny—just beginnin' *OC*
254.13 Just beginning to get their eyes open.] S1; *om.* S3, S5
254.14 You do] S1; *You* do *DC*, *DC*[1948]
254.16 warm, . . . mewing] S1; warm. It made a mewin' *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
254.16 running] S1; runnin' *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
254.17 coming] S1; comin' *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
254.19–20 it stark, . . . tongue:] S1; it stark, ◆ chiseling [chiselling *DC*[1948]] it out with hammer and knife of words, smoothing it with his tongue: *DC;* it new, shaping it with words, smoothing it with his tongue. *OC*

254.19 chiseling] S1; chiselling *DC*[1948]

254.21–22 "I dropped . . . ¶ "He closed] S1; "I dropped . . . ¶ "The kitten closed *DC*, *DC*[1948]; "I dropped the kitten in the water. The kitten closed *OC*

254.22 gasping . . . remember] S1; tryin' for air. I 'member *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

254.25 remember] S1; know *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

254.25–26 drifting . . . slow] S1; driftin' aroun', aroun', *DC*, *DC*[1948]; driftin' aroun', slow *OC*

254.25 worrying] S1; worryin', *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

254.26 looking] S1; lookin' *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

254.27 either] S1; neither *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

254.27 Ahhhhh. . . ."] S1; Ahhhhh. . . " S3; Ahhhh. . . ." S5, *DC*, *OC*; Ahhh. . . ." *DC*[1948]

254.28–30 Hearts beat . . . apprehensively.] S1; Hearts jumped quick. Eyes swiveled from Juke to the shelved jar, back down, up again apprehensively. *OC*

254.29 as one] S1; like one *DC*, *DC*[1948]

254.29 sees a a tennis] S1; sees a tennis S3, S5

254.32 Swamp Crick Road] S1; Swamp Creek Road, S3, S5; Heron Swamp, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

254.35 thet] S1; that *OC*

254.35 am thee center] S1; am the center S3

254.35–39 *know*? . . . SWAYING] S1; *know*? I tells you. That be the ◆ center [centre *DC*[1948]] of Life, sure 'nuff! Lord believe me, it so!" ¶ Swaying *DC*, *OC*

254.39–40 blown . . . but himself.] S1; blown by a swamp wind nobody but himself could see, hear or feel. S3, S5; blown by a swamp wind no one could see, hear or feel, save himself. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

254.40–41 if loosened from all mooring.] S1; if cut free to wander. *OC*

255.1 Sump,] S1; Swamp, S3, S5

255.1 all sort] S1; allsort S2

255.4 AM A MAN!] S1; *am a man!* S3, S5; AM HUMAN! *OC*

255.6 year] S1; years S5

◊255.7 Ten thousand year] S1; "Ten thousand years S3, S5

255.7 reiterated] S1; whispered *OC*

255.8 better.] S1; betta. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

255.10 thet] S1; that *OC*

255.10 from] S1; *from DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

255.11 going back TO it!"] S1; goin' back *to* it." *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

255.12 eyes has it] S1; eyes it *OC*

255.14 green!"] S1; *green!*" *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

255.18 grey!"] S1; *grey!*" *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

255.23 child,] S1; kid, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

255.24 wandered around for] S1; wandered for S3, S5

255.24 around] S1; *om.* S5; aroun' *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
255.24 in the drippin' trails] S1; in all that drippin', on the trails *OC*
255.24–25 gullies, the wet ravines,] S1; gullies, in them old wet ravines *OC*
255.27 —solution, like] S1; —scum—like *OC*
255.27 mosquito] S1; 'skeeters *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
255.27 sleepin'] S1; seepin' S3, S5
255.28 liquid.] S1; sump-water. *OC*
255.28 we know,] S1; we can tell, *OC*
255.28 know.] S1; *know! OC*
255.29 know . . .”] S1; know—” *OC*
255.30 women folks] S1; women folk *DC*; womenfolk *DC*[1948], *OC*
255.30 shadows.] S1; shadow. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
255.31 fumbling] S1; fumbled *OC*
255.31–32 Tridden. She said:] S1; Tridden, and she murmured: *OC*
255.33 naked into] S1; naked to *OC*
255.33 every] S1; ever *DC*; ever' *DC*[1948],*OC*
255.34 and they never] S1; and never *OC*
255.36 Breaths were taken in, snatched] S1; Breath was snatched *OC*
255.37 grim facial muscles.] S1; hard, clinching muscle. *OC*
255.39 onto] S1; to *OC*
255.40 My Foley!] S1; My Foley. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
255.42–256.3 jar. ¶ | ¶ THE] S1; jar. ¶ The *OC*
256.4 like spring] S1; like a spring *OC*
255.5–6 resolute ice . . . torrent!] S1; resolute ◆ ice calm life [calmness *OC*] and belief and easy humbleness was gnawed and ◆ eaten [eaten by that juice and melted *OC*[1970]] away in a torrent! Someone screamed. *DC*, *DC*[1948]
256.7 moved!” someone screamed. ¶] S1; moved!” ¶ *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
256.8 didn't] S1; didn' *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
256.12 Tridden, the mother woman.] S1; Tridden. *OC*
256.12–13 my baby, my Foley!”] S1; my Foley!” *OC*
256.14 white] S1; gone *OC*
256.15 broke out of her, then] S1; broke out of her. *DC*, *DC*[1948]; broke from her. *OC*
256.16 “Now, now, there now, Mrs.] S1; “Now, Mrs. *OC*
256.16 Set . . . shakin'.] S1; Set yourself down, stop shakin'. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
256.18 women-folk] S1; women-folks S3, S5; women folk *DC*; womenfolk *DC*[1948], *OC*
256.20 afraid.] S1; again. S5
256.21 pink flower] S1; ping flower S3, S5
256.22 grey] S1; gray *OC*
256.24 talking . . . Like] S1; talking and shoving around words. Like *DC*, *DC*[1948]; talkin' and shovin' words. Like *OC*

256.24 never know] S1; never find out, never know *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
256.25 we could . . . want] S1; we found out we wouldn't *want* *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
256.25–26 like them magic] S1; like magic *OC*
256.26 tricks them magicians] S1; tricks magicians *OC*
256.26 at the show.] S1; at shows. *OC*
256.26–27 Once you find the feke, it ain't no more funn' the innards] S1; Once you know how it's done it ain't no more fun than the innards S3, S5
256.26 feke, it ain't] S1; fake, it ain't *DC*[1948]; fake, ain't *OC*
256.27 funn'] S1; fun'n *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
256.27 collecting] S1; collectin' *OC*
256.28 talking, . . . something,] S1; talkin', social-like, with somethin', *OC*
256.28(2) something,] S1; somethin' *OC*
256.29 found] S1; spied *OC*
256.29–30 nothing to talk] S1; nothin' to chew *OC*
256.36 undermine Charlie's social] S1; kill Charlie's new *OC*
256.37 "Nothing," joked] S1; "Nothin',^ repeated *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
256.38 and a stinkin'] S1; and stinkin' *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
256.40 jest come around] S1; jest around S3, S5; just come aroun' *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
256.40 nitwits] S1; cyppers *DC*, *DC*[1948]; fools *OC*
256.41 I gits a kick out of it.] S1; *om.* *OC*
256.42 Anybody] S1; Any body *DC*, *DC*[1948]
257.2 dumb,] S1; far gone, *OC*
257.2–3 with angry . . . room.] S1; with her fingernails away back in a corner of the room. *OC*
257.3 Charlie felt . . . at this.] S1; Charlie saw her mouth twitch and was cold and could not speak. *OC*
257.4–5 boots and the sound of crickets] S1; boots and the sound with his high-heeled boots and the sound of crickets S2
257.6 saying before the storm;] S1; sayin' before the storm: *OC*
257.7–12 things. What . . . . And] S1; things. All kinds of life—death—I don't know. Mix rain and sun and muck and jelly, all that together. Grass and snakes and children and mist and all the nights and days in the dead canebrake. Why's it have to be *one* thing? Maybe it's lots." And *OC*
257.12 talking went on] S1; talking ran soft *OC*
257.15–18 evening. . . . ¶ | ¶ THE] S1; evening . . . ¶ The *OC*
257.18 late,] S1; after midnight, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
257.19 Tom Carmody?] S1; Tom? *OC*
257.21 shushing] S1; slushing S5
257.22 tacked] S1; tracked S5
257.22 porch.] S1; porch, into the house, into the bedroom. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
257.24 *feel*] S1; feel *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

◊257.34 bare] S1; bear S3, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
257.38 Charlie stirred] S1; Charlie was ice-cold. He stirred *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
257.39 Charlie—" insinuatingly.] S1; Charlie." S3, S5
257.41–42 Charlie," she hissed.] S1; Charlie." S3, S5
258.1 "Go—away," . . . voice.] S1; "Go away," he said. *OC*
258.2 "Unh-unh. . . . We] S1; "Unh-unh! No, no, sir, Charlie. Why, no, Charlie—Honey. Not until I tell!" ¶ "Git!" he said. ¶ "Let me tell! We *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.3 almost died laughin', he] S1; liked to die laughin'. He *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.3 sold it to some—hick—] S1; sold that jar and what was in it to some, some—hick— *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.4 more than two dollars] S1; more'n two bucks *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.5–6 of flower with her breath as its perfume] S1; of laughter. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.7 it, snapping, quick:] S1; it, quick: *OC*
*258.8 Liquid rubber, . . . chemicals!] S1; Liquid rubber, ◆ papier-mache [papier-mâché *DC*[1948]], silk, cotton, chemicals! *DC*; Rubber, papier-mache, silk, cotton, boric-acid! *OC*
258.9 metal-framework] S1; metal frame *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.9–10 That's all! That's all it is, Charlie! That's all,"] S1; That's all it is, Charlie. That's all!" *OC*
258.10–11 shrilled in triumph. ¶ He] S1; shrilled. ¶ "No, no!" ¶ He *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.11–12 roaring, tears coming bright on his cheeks:] S1; roaring. *OC*
258.14 teased.] S1; said, *OC*
258.16 ain't—gonna] S1; ain't gonna *OC*
258.17–18 ¶ "Ouch, you hurt me!" ¶ "You *ain't* gonna tell them."] S1; *om. OC*
258.19 want] S1; wan *OC*
258.19 Charles?"] S1; Charlie?" *OC*
258.20 her wrists . . . well:] S1; her off and away. *OC*
*258.21 leave alone?] S1; leave me alone? *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.21 You're] S1; You *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.21 jealous of] S1; jealous mean of *DC*, *DC*[1948]
258.21 everything] S1; ever'thing *OC*
258.21–22 took shine off] S1; took a shine S5
258.22 didn't sleep right until] S1; didn' sleep right 'til *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.24 laughed nastily.] S1; laughed. *OC*
258.24 *won't* tell everybody,"] S1; won't tell any body," *DC*; won't tell anybody," *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.25 caught on to her.] S1; stared at her. *OC*
258.27 Carmody. Him laughin'. I] S1; Carmody. I *OC*
258.27 him from laughin'.] S1; him laughin'. *OC*
258.31 rickety] S1; spindly *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
258.37 Thedy was standing,] S1; Theyd was standing, *DC*[1948]

258.37 was standing,] S1; stood *OC*

258.37–38 petted it thoughtfully.] S1; petted and stroked and gradually quieted himself over it. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

258.39 of comraderie, conversation woven into the fabric of the] S1; of camaraderie, conversation woven into the fabric of the S2; of camaraderie, conversation moving about the *DC*, *DC*[1948]; of friends and talk, moving about the *OC*

259.1 "Thedy,] S1; "Theyd, *DC*[1948]

259.3 lyin'!"] S1; lyin'," he said, quietly. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

259.5 "They, this jar HAS] S1; "Thedy, this jar *has* S3, S5; "This—this jar *has* *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

259.7 carny-man,] S1; carny-boss, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

259.7 him, lied. Come] S1; him, he lied." Charlie took a deep breath and then said, "Come *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

259.9–10 here." ¶ "Keep] S1; here." ¶ he took a step ◆ toward [towards *DC*[1948]] her. "Come here." ¶ "Keep *DC*, *OC*

259.11 "I just] S1; "Just *OC*

259.11–12 insisting.] S1; insistent. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

259.12 "Here, kittie, kittie, kittie—HERE KITTIE!"] S1; "Here, kittie. Here, kittie, kittie, kittie—HERE KITTIE!" *OC*

259.17 old, creaking] S1; old, sweet and sour, creaking *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

*◊259.18 symbol, though hope, fear] S1; symbol, through hope, fear S3, S5; thought, hope, fear *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

259.25–26 Charlie." . . . Gone] S1; Charlie." Somebody ◆ peered [glanced around *DC*, *DC*[1948]] into the empty bedroom. "Your wife gone *OC*

259.27 run off again to Tennessee.] S1; run for Tennessee. *OC*

259.28 running off.] S1; runnin'. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

259.29 ganntin' off.] S1; ganntin' around, *DC*, *DC*[1948]; jumpin' around, *OC*

259.30–31 suddenly, . . . dark—Tom] S1; suddenly, walking on the dark porch and shining his eyes in at the people—Tom *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

259.35 it had been kicked with a boot.] S1; it had been sick for a long time. *OC*

259.38 said Jahdoo.] S1; said Granny Carnation. *OC*

259.39 It was] S1; They was *OC*

259.40 upward.] S1; upwards. *DC*[1948]

259.40 anutther] S1; another S5, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

259.41 before."] S1; *before!*" *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

260.4 staring at] S1; staring in at *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

260.5 at peace] S1; all peace *OC*

260.6 life and world and thoughts.] S1; life and thoughts. *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

260.8 tide] S1; fall *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

260.9 baby!" screamed the thought of Mrs.] S1; baby." thought Mrs. *OC*

◊260.10 grain!"] S1; brain!" *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
260.13 clawing in Juke's] S1; clawing Juke's S3, S5
260.14 skull.] S1; eyes. *OC*
260.16 swamp, . . . sea!"] S1; swamp, death, the pale things, the wet things from the sea!" *OC*
260.17 Silence, and then Gramps said,] S1; Silence. And then Gramps whispered, *OC*
260.17 "I wonder. I wonder. Wonder] S1; "I wonder. Wonder *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
◊260.19 tampering] S1; tamping S5, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
260.21 Charlie smiled.] S1; Charlie shook his head slowly and settled down with his guests, looking, looking. *OC*
260.23 in plasma,] S1; in alcohol plasma, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*
260.24 dreaming, circling,] S1; dreaming and circling, *DC*, *DC*[1948], *OC*

Line-End Hyphenation

250.8 carny-/boss] carny-boss
250.18 big-/mouth] big-mouth
250.36 drab-/haired] drabhaired
252.35 soap-/boxes] soap-boxes
253.10 pin-/cushion] pincushion
253.14 bull-/frogs] bull-frogs

LINE-END HYPHENATIONS IN THE EDITION TEXT

The following listing identifies those compound words hyphenated at the ends of lines in the critical text of the present edition that, in being quoted or transcribed from the text, must retain their hyphens to preserve the copy-text reading. All other possible compounds hyphenated at the ends of lines in the present edition should be transcribed as single words.

53.36–37 sword-flingers
61.33–34 spin-the-bottle
63.15–16 never-stopping
69.20–21 son-of-a-witch-doctor!"
98.17–18 gentle-faced
101.13–14 fork-tine
111.27–28 "Hing-a-ding-a-rock-in-my-shoe!"
121.30–31 big-time
130.36–37 self-doubts
143.26–27 stumble-bum
148.16–17 ray-burn
155.19–20 mouse-grey
188.10–11 sun-mellowed
188.26–27 red-white-and-blue
193.10–11 twenty-first
211.13–14 thin-muscled
211.23–24 ear-lobes
225.17–18 ear-drums
228.9–10 merry-go-round
229.18–19 jet-flame!